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CONTENTS

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

8 March Middle East and South Asia Review 1

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Discusses 'Readiness' To Talk to Israelis *[Kuwait AL-QABAS 6 Mar]* 3
Calls for 'More Steadfastness' *[Radio Monte Carlo]* 4
Habash Pledges Armed Struggle, Criticizes 'Arafat *[Radio Monte Carlo]* 4
Abu Sharif Urges UN To Appoint 'Special Envoy' *[WAKH]* 5
Paper Reports Mosad Anti-U.S. Operation *[Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD 4 Mar]* 6
Hawatimah Criticizes U.S. 'Ignorance' in Mideast *[London AL-MAJALLAH 1-7 Mar]* 6
PNC Speaker on 'Uprising,' Resistance, Peace *[Kuwait AL-ANBA' 6 Mar]* 6
PLO Sets Up Donation Collection Committee *[KUNA]* 7

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Egypt's 'Abd al-Majid Continues Political Talks *[APS]* 8
Conveys Message to Bendjedid *[Algiers TV]* 8
Makes Statement, Departs *[Algiers Radio]* 8
Iranian Oil Minister Arrives for Consultations *[Algiers Radio]* 9

Egypt

Sudan's Al-Mirghani Telephones Mubarak *[MENA]* 9
Al-Mahjub Rejects Opposition's Letter, Memorandum *[AL-AHRAM 5 Mar]* 9
People's Assembly Disqualifies Wafd Deputy *[AL-JUMHURIYAH 6 Mar]* 9
Membership in Arab Labor Organization Restored *[MENA]* 10
'Abd al-Majid Returns from Algeria, Comments *[Cairo Radio]* 10
Butrus Ghali Leaves for Ethiopia, Uganda 6 Mar *[Cairo Radio]* 10
Qandil, UK Minister Inspect Sinai Coal Mine *[MENA]* 10

Libya

GPC Criticizes Bureau for Foreign Liaison *[Tripoli TV]* 10
Liaison Member Answers Criticism *[Tripoli TV]* 11
Sudanese Prime Minister Addresses GPC 7 Mar *[Tripoli TV]* 13
Meets With Al-Qadhdhafi *[JANA]* 13
Departs After Visit *[JANA]* 13
Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Somali Naval Officer *[Tripoli TV]* 14

Morocco

Hassan Ratifies 1972 Border Treaty With Algeria *[Rabat Radio]* 14
Officials Renew Allegiance to King on Throne Day *[MAP]* 14
Hassan Promotes Senior Military Officers *[MAP]* 14
Basri, French Official Discuss Cooperation *[MAP]* 14

Sudan

DUP Expresses 'Surprise' Over Al-Mahdi Statement *[MENA]* 15
Trade Unions, Parties Comment on New Government *[MENA]* 15
Al-Turabi Rejects Al-Mahdi's Political Program *[SUNA]* 16
'UKAZ Interviews Al-Turabi *[Jeddah, 3 Mar]* 16
Armed Forces Spokesman: 'No Pledges' Given *[Khartoum Radio]* 17
Rebels Claim Capture of Over 200 Army Soldiers *[Radio SPLA]* 17
Dropped Supplies Captured *[Radio SPLA]* 18
Foreign Ministry Reviews Relations With Kenya *[Khartoum Radio]* 18
SUNA: Further Denunciation of 'Satanic Verses' 18

Tunisia

Ben Ali Submits Candidacy for President 7 Mar *[Tunis Radio]* 18
Egypt's 'Abd al-Majid Stops Over for Talks *[Tunis Radio]* 18

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Intra-Gulf Affairs

GCC Ministerial Council Begins 30th Session *[WAKH]* 19
Lebanon Crisis Discussed *[WAKH]* 19
Economic Cooperation Reviewed *[WAKH]* 19
Second Session Concluded *[WAKH]* 20
King Fahd Receives Ministers *[SPA]* 20
Press Communique Issued *[SPA]* 20

Bahrain

Foreign Minister Comments on GCC Session *[WAKH]* 21
'Arafat Arrives in Manama for Talks 7 Mar *[WAKH]* 22
Holds Talks With Amir *[WAKH]* 22
Leaves for Pakistan 8 Mar *[WAKH]* 23
New Zealand Minister, Delegation Depart 4 Mar *[WAKH]* 23

Kuwait

Mine Found in Territorial Waters, Detonated *[KUNA]* 23

Oman

Foreign Minister Departs for Riyadh GCC Meeting *[Muscat Radio]* 23
Iran's Jannati Arrives With Khamene'i Message *[WAKH]* 23
Sultan Qabus Receives Message *[WAKH]* 23
Discusses Rushdie Novel *[IRNA]* 23
Iranian Envoy Conveys Velayati Message on ICO *[WAKH]* 23

IRAQ

UN Informed of President's Proposal on POW's *[INA]* 24
Cabinet Discusses 'Restrictions' on Freedom *[INA]* 24
Agriculture Minister Dismissed for 'Failure' *[INA]* 24
Technicians Begin To Clear Shatt al-'Arab *[INA]* 24

ISRAEL

Weizman Plans Meeting With USSR's Dubinin *[Jerusalem Radio]* 25
Shamir Orders Meeting Canceled *[Jerusalem Radio]* 25
Weizman Cancels Meeting *[Jerusalem Radio]* 25
Arens Attacks Shevardnadze's 'Blunt Phrases' *[MA'ARIV 8 Mar]* 25

IDF, UNIFIL Conflict in Southern Lebanon *[Jerusalem Radio]* 25
Rabin Criticizes UNIFIL *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 26
Shamir Denies Rumors of Talks With PLO *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 26
SHAS Has 'No Plans' To Meet With PLO *[THE JERUSALEM POST 8 Mar]* 26
Settlers Proceed to Unauthorized Settlements *[Jerusalem Radio]* 27
Settlers Evacuated From Site *[Jerusalem Radio]* 27
Shamir: No New Settlements in 'Near Future' *[HATZOFE 8 Mar]* 27
IMF, Likud Ministers Criticize Economic Policies *[THE JERUSALEM POST 6 Mar]* 27
Frayj: Israel Wants To Annex West Bank, Gaza *[YEDI'OT AHARONOT 8 Mar]* 28
PRC Official Sees 'Rosy Future' in Relations *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
Polish Deputy Agriculture Minister Pays Visit *[HADASHOT 27 Feb]* 28
Meets With Shamir *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 29
Cooperation Agreement Signed *[THE JERUSALEM POST 5 Mar]* 29
Poland's Rakowski Comments on Bilateral Relations *['AL HAMISHMAR 24 Feb]* 29
New Orders Issued on Taking Down Slogans, Flags *[Jerusalem TV]* 30
Paper Reports Conflicting Casualty Tolls *[HA'OLAM HAZE 8 Mar]* 30
Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories 30
30 Reported Hurt in Gaza Riots *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
2 Reserve Soldiers Sentenced *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Soldier Slightly Wounded *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
Curfews Lifted; Strike Staged *[Jerusalem Radio]* 30
5 Said Wounded in Gaza Riots *[Jerusalem Radio]* 31
Data on Unrest in Israeli Arab Areas Reported *[Jerusalem Radio]* 31

JORDAN

King Husayn Addresses University Students 7 Mar *[Amman TV]* 32
King Husayn Receives PLO's Mahmud 'Abbas *[Amman TV]* 34
Foreign Minister Meets 'Abbas *[Amman Radio]* 35

LEBANON

British Embassy Advises UK Nationals To Leave *[VOL]* 36
Group Threatens To Attack UK Guards of Rushdie *[AFP]* 36
'Awn Backs Arab Efforts, Friendly Ties With Syria *[Beirut Radio]* 36
'Awn Opens Museum Crossing to Supply Trucks *[VOL]* 36
Lebanese Forces Assail West Beirut Stands *[RFL]* 36
Police, Syrian Soldiers Clash in West Beirut *[RFL]* 37
Syrians Seize Booby-Trapped Car 8 Mar *[Beirut Radio]* 37
Syria To Send Hizballah Fighters To South *[RFL]* 37
Group Claims Attack on Syrian Army Post in Beirut *[RFL]* 37
PSP Reportedly Deploys Missiles at Al-Jiyah *[VOL]* 37
PSP-Held Port Fires at Army Gunboat 7 Mar *[VOM]* 37
VOL Notes SLA-Fundamentalist Clash 7 Mar 37
Amal Resistance Attacks Israeli-Lahd Positions *[Beirut Radio]* 38
Israeli Troops Attack Norwegian Contingent *[Beirut Radio]* 38
Israeli Aircraft Fly Over Beirut, Draw Fire *[RFL]* 38
Aircraft Seen Over South *[RFL]* 38

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Rebels Launch Attacks on Jalalabad Airport *[AFP]* 39
'Heavy' Casualties Reported *[AFP]* 39
Jalalabad Airport Captured *[SPA]* 40
Mojaddedi Confirms Capture *[AFP]* 40
Kabul Airport Closed; Rocket Attacks Feared *[AFP]* 40
Reopens After 2 Hours *[AFP]* 41
Mojaddedi To Address Nation From Peshawar *[Islamabad Radio]* 41
Islamabad Reports Speech 41

Peace, Refugees Priorities *[Islamabad Radio]* 41
Resistance Cabinet To Meet in 'Liberated Area' *[AFP]* 42
Meeting Scheduled for 10 Mar *[Islamabad Radio]* 42
UN Notified of Pakistani 'Violations' of Accords 42
Notices 279-281 *[BAKHTAR]* 42
Notices 282-285 *[Kabul Radio]* 43
Envoy to Bulgaria on Need for Political Solution *[Sofia RABOTNICHESKO DELO 3 Mar]* 43

Bangladesh

Soviet Ambassador Seeks Improved Relations *[SANGBAD 24 Feb]* 44
PRC Army Chief, Military Delegation Arrive *[Dhaka Radio]* 44
UN Secretary General Departs for Nepal 6 Mar *[Dhaka Radio]* 44

India

Mongolian Leader Batmonh Continues Visit 45
Feted by Venkataraman *[Delhi Radio]* 45
Confers With Gandhi *[Delhi Radio]* 45
Holds News Conference *[Delhi Radio]* 45
Further on News Conference *[AFP]* 45
Cases Against Sikh Political Detainees Withdrawn *[Delhi Radio]* 46
New Units Added to Rajasthan Atomic Power Station *[Delhi Radio]* 46

Iran

Rushdie Affair Has 'Negative Impact' on Hostages *[IRNA]* 46
Further on Reaction to 'Satanic Verses' 46
Velayati Message to ICO Head *[Tehran Radio]* 46
Messages Handed to Oman, Qatar *[Tehran Radio]* 47
Golpayegani Sends Message *[IRNA]* 47
Musavi Statement to Cabinet *[Tehran TV]* 47
Musavi Praises Khomeyni Edict *[Tehran Radio]* 47
Editorial on Need To Prevent Economic 'Terrorism' *[ETTELA'AT 25 Feb]* 48
Further Reportage on Breaking of Ties With UK 48
Foreign Ministry Denies Claims *[Tehran TV]* 48
UK Lawyer To Prosecute Rushdie *[IRNA]* 48
Commentary on Severing Ties *[Tehran Radio]* 49
ABRAR Cited on Cutting Ties *[IRNA]* 49
Editorial on Ultimatum to UK *[TEHRAN TIMES 1 Mar]* 49
IRNA Cites BBC on Dispute 50
Larijani on Government's Position on Shatt al-'Arab *[IRNA]* 50
Mujahidin Leader Hikmatyar Briefs Velayati *[IRNA]* 51
Asks Support for 'Government' *[IRNA]* 51
Chinese Vice Premier Tian Departs 7 Mar *[Tehran Radio]* 51
Oil Minister Aqazadeh Departs for Algeria *[Tehran Radio]* 52
No Government Funds Allocated for Peugeot Deal *[IRNA]* 52
Majlis Speaker Visits Esfahan Aircraft Factory *[Tehran TV]* 52
Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Credit Shortages *[Tehran Radio]* 52
Commentary on National Cooperation Plan *[Tehran TV]* 53
Narcotics Seized; Addicts, Traffickers Captured *[Tehran Radio]* 53
Daily Says Inflation Fuels Drug Addiction *[IRNA]* 53

Nepal

AFP: India Withdraws Special Trade Arrangements 54
Indian Foreign Minister Arrives on 1-Day Visit *[Delhi Radio]* 54
Holds Talks With Upadhyaya *[Delhi Radio]* 54
AFP: King Confers With UN's Perez de Cuellar 55

Pakistan

India Reportedly Sending Advisers to Kabul *[THE MUSLIM 25 Feb]* 55
PLO's 'Arafat Arrives, Greeted by Bhutto *[Islamabad Radio]* 55
Chinese Delegation Departs After 10-Day Visit *[Islamabad Radio]* 56
President Says Punjab Conflict 'War of Words' *[Islamabad Radio]* 56
Punjab Minister Resigns, Assails Nawaz Sharif *[Islamabad Radio]* 56
People's Party Demands Punjab Chief's Resignation *[Islamabad Radio]* 56
Nawaz Sharif Rejects Demand *[Islamabad Radio]* 57
40 Senior Army Officers Retired From Service *[THE MUSLIM 26 Feb]* 57
Government Importing 2.5 Million Tons of Wheat *[Islamabad Radio]* 58

Sri Lanka

Foreign Minister, Soviet Official Discuss Ties *[Colombo International]* 58
Northeast Council Chief Minister Issues Warning *[Colombo SUN 25 Feb]* 58
Members From Northeast To Boycott Parliament *[Colombo International]* 58
6 JVP 'Extremists' Killed in Hideout Raid *[Delhi Radio]* 59

8 March Middle East and South Asia Review

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Israel

Peace Talks—Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir declared that the "United States is the only country in world we trust" to conduct peace negotiations, Tel Aviv's IDF radio reported. Referring to a reported PLO offer of a cease-fire on the Lebanese border in exchange for the IDF ending the use of weapons in the territories, Shamir said Israel "will not hold peace talks with the PLO" and he described rumors of contacts with the PLO as "groundless," the radio added.

Situation in Territories—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat issued a "special appeal" 7 March calling on the people of Nabulus and all citizens in the West Bank and Gaza to "show more steadfastness and perseverance," Radio Monte Carlo reported. He said that the peoples' "sacrifices, pain, and struggle" are "drawing the map of the free homeland," whether the enemies like it or not.

Clashes between the IDF and citizens in the Gaza Strip left 30 people wounded, according to Jerusalem radio citing "local" sources. In one incident, the IDF had to "rescue" soldiers who were attacked by United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) employees.

The IDF also entered an UNRWA clinic in Jabalyah refugee camp to disperse stonethrowers. According to another report, a general strike is in force in "Judea and Samaria" and in the Gaza Strip, the radio added.

Lebanon

Southern Military Situation—A "serious incident" occurred 7 March when an IDF unit clashed with the Norwegian contingent of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), Jerusalem radio reported. During the incident an IDF tank rammed several UNIFIL vehicles in order to break through a roadblock set up by the UNIFIL contingent.

Travel Advisory—The British Embassy in Beirut has advised British nationals "not to travel to Lebanon" and Britons already in Lebanon "should leave as quickly as possible" as a result of the Salman Rushdie affair, Beirut's Voice of Lebanon reported 8 March.

Situation in Beirut—Syrian troops and Lebanese police carried out "reciprocal kidnappings" of each other's personnel in several parts of West Beirut 7 March, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon reported.

Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn's Army Command ordered the reopening of Beirut's Museum crossing point, Beirut's Voice of Lebanon radio reported. The move is aimed at countering the closure of the port crossing by General al-Khatib's forces.

In another development, Gen 'Awn ordered two patrol boats to be stationed outside Al-Awza'i port and another outside Al-Jiyah port "to enforce the blockade" of illegal ports, according to the clandestine Voice of the People radio.

The Progressive Socialist Party's (PSP) militia have reportedly deployed SAM-7 missiles near Al-Jiyah port to attack patrolling Lebanese Air Force planes "if they intercept any ship that might enter the port," the Voice of Lebanon radio reported citing "security sources."

The Lebanese Forces Command Council expressed "astonishment" that "certain political forces" based in West Beirut could reverse their policies "overnight" with regard to the closure of illegal ports, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon reported citing a 7 March Council statement.

The Council also criticized PSP leader Walid Junblatt's decision to cancel his recent call for the return of Christian refugees to the mountain region.

PLO Affairs

PFLP leader George Habash pledged to "continue and even escalate' its military operations against the Israeli "occupiers," Radio Monte Carlo reported citing remarks at a 7 March news conference in Damascus. Habash also accused 'Arafat of abandoning the Algiers PNC resolutions, especially those on the continuation of armed struggle.

Afghanistan

The mujahidin captured Jalalabad airport 8 March and have also gained control of Jalalabad military cantonment, AFP reported citing Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, prime minister of the interim Afghan government. The mujahidin have entered Jalalabad city itself and "fierce fighting" is raging in the city, the agency added.

Iran-Iraq Negotiations

Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz has informed the United Nations of Iraq's "immediate readiness" to accept "a full and comprehensive exchange of POW's," INA reported. However, the plan "circumvents" UN Security Council Resolution 598 and shows that Iraq "has moved outside and beyond" the framework of the resolution, IRNA reported citing the TEHRAN TIMES daily.

In a related development, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Larijani asserted that Iraq "would not be allowed" to use the River Arvand until its "total

withdrawal from Iranian soil," IRNA reported. Larijani said Iran "will not step back from its principled stance" that Iraq should accept Resolution 598 "in its entirety.

Iran

The Majlis "should carefully study" ways to respond to Bonn's "insulting attitude" in the Rushdie affair, IRNA reported, citing Tehran's KAYHAN daily. The paper urged that the "audacious German insults to holy Islam must not be left unanswered."

Libya

The secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison rebutted criticisms of his department raised by the congress Secretariat at the General People's Congress in Banghazi, Tripoli television reported in a broadcast from the congress.

Among other things, the Secretariat complained that secretaries of people's committees had not been appointed to several foreign missions, that the department has shown "no interest" in various international organizations and bodies, and that there is "weakness" in coordination between the Foreign Liaison Committee and the Information Committee regarding "hostile" foreign media campaigns.

Sudan

The Armed Forces "has not taken any new measures" following its 28 February statement which stressed its commitment to "constitutional legitimacy" and its "determination" to have the 20 February memorandum fully implemented, Khartoum National Unity radio reported citing an Army Command "official statement."

The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) issued a statement 7 March expressing "surprise" over Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's 5 March news conference remarks in which he decided not to resign, MENA reported.

The statement described Al-Mahdi's position as "an attempt to obliterate" the November 1988 peace initiative and "inconsistent" with the action program's call for the government's resignation.

According to SUNA, DUP leader Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani confirmed his party's commitment to the action program and called for the formation of a "broad-based government."

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Discusses 'Readiness' To Talk to Israelis

JN0703161489 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 6 Mar 89 p 1, 20

[By Muhammad Jasim al-Saqir]

[Text] PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat indicated his readiness to negotiate with the Israelis in occupied Jerusalem if he receives the backing of all Arabs. He said: I am not Al-Sadat to visit Israel and hold negotiations alone. I will not go except with the approval of all Arabs.

In a meeting with editors in chief of local newspapers, which was held in the Bayan Palace yesterday [5 March], he said that the late President Al-Sadat visited Israel without Arab approval and without Arab support. He made concessions on the Palestinian right to self-determination, which is a right he did not own. Had he gone with Arab approval and support and insisted on his stands, there would have been a Palestinian state now. But he rushed too fast and offered one concession after another.

Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] affirmed that the intifadah [uprising] will not stop no matter what the circumstances until our demands are realized. It will continue even after the international conference convenes. During the peace conference, it will continue and there is no discussion about stopping it now. He said that the uprising had changed the world's understanding of us. We now stand strongly before the world.

He said our losses amount to 631 martyrs, 300,000 injured, 6,000 cases of abortion, and 6,000 cases of disabled, whereas Israeli losses during the 12 months since the start of the intifadah amount to $2.1 billion. This means a monthly average of $170 million. There are also 80,000 soldiers on the streets.

He said the intifadah had started its waves in 1986. The Amman summit was its matchstick.

'Arafat rejected the opinion that the intifadah was spontaneous and isolated from the PLO. He affirmed that the intifadah started with full coordination between those inside and the PLO leadership.

He clarified that on 7 December, 1987, the accredited ambassadors in Kuwait of the Security Council permanent members' countries declared that the intifadah had started.

The Palestinian chief affirmed that the Muslim Brotherhood has no relationship to the intifadah, which started in isolation from that movement. He indicated that the Brotherhood in Palestine refused to issue a statement supporting the intifadah at the beginning. However, he said, he had managed to get this support through the Muslim Brotherhood in Kuwait.

Abu 'Ammar asked the Arab countries to support the intifadah. He said the PLO is paying workers who were forced to stop work in 1948-occupied Palestine.

He added that the intifadah must continue and must be provided with all necessities.

Abu 'Ammar declared that the independent state will be established in 2 years' time. I can see Jerusalem, and I will not concede it whatsoever. In 2 years' time, this is what our generation can achieve. As for the future, no one knows anything about that.

Abu 'Ammar declared that the Arab summit will be held next June in Riyadh or Morocco. It will discuss three issues, which are: Palestine, Lebanon, and Egypt's return.

Answering a question on Palestinian concessions, Abu 'Ammar said: Indeed, the PNC resolutions in its latest session in Algiers are Arab resolutions and were approved by all Arabs in the Fes summit. He added that in 1982 when Israel invaded Lebanon, any small Arab army would have been capable of reaching Jerusalem, as there were three divisions distributed on the borders with Syria, Egypt, and Jordan. The rest, which were eight and a half divisions, were in Lebanon. However, he said, the Arabs did not take that opportunity.

On the result of the Israeli local elections, Abu 'Ammar said the results do not mean that the Israeli people do not want negotiations with the PLO. In fact, he noted, the latest opinion poll showed that 54 percent of the Isarelis support negotiations. However, he said, the election results came because of the absence of a leadership for the Labor Party. He added: The Israelis want negotiations, but we are fighting America, and I do not believe in the strength of the Zionist lobby in the United States. Indeed, he said, U.S. interests in the region run the U.S. policy.

He added if America wants an international conference convened, the Israeli leaders, headed by the hardliners, will agree before the doves. It is America that counts, he said.

Abu 'Ammar announced that a new Yalta is coming up in the region. He said: Our only concern is to be present in this Yalta, not in the first one. He added: We are now present through the Soviets and the Chinese, from whom I received a message the day before yesterday on what the Chinese leaders, who adopted the Palestinian position, told U.S. President Bush last week. President Bush's reply was good.

He added that there is also a French and European position. He said what is required now is Arab pressure on Europe and the United States and to exploit this great opportunity.

'Arafat rejected the accusation leveled at the PLO of craving dialogue with the United States. He defended the idea of an international conference. He said some circumstances are moving in the interest of the PLO. He added: Developments are now moving in our favor. We either become part of international detente or become like the Armenians, and we have decided that what happened to the Armenians will not happen to us. We have decided to be part of international detente.

'Arafat said: I do not act emotionally. I am fearless during crises. I took my brave decision, from 1974, to establish a Palestinian state, even if it is in Jericho.

He said the PLO recognized Resolutions 242 and 338, accompanied with the rights to return, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent state. He added: My point of weakness is the Arab position.

He praised the results of Shevardnadze's recent Middle East tour. He said: The Soviet foreign minister promised me that the Palestine question would be discussed during his meeting today with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

As regards the Israeli position, 'Arafat said that the Labor Party has lost its principles, as well as its battle against Likud. He described Abba Eban as a liar and said that when Eban was foreign minister he rejected peace and when he left the government he theorized. 'Arafat also condemned the U.S.-Israel alliance, and said that Israel acts at the behest of the United States and that the United States is not Israel's ally but its "god," as Golda Me'ir put it.

'Arafat blamed the United States' Arab friends because they did not exploit this friendship to serve the Palestine question. He expressed hope that the international conference will be held or a preparatory committee will be set up this year.

Abu 'Ammar disclosed the existence of negotiations with Israel through the United Nations to stop the fedayeen attacks in southern Lebanon, and said that other negotiations with Amal Movement and Hizballah are under way. He added: We have clear demands in return for ending the operations in southern Lebanon. We demand an end to the air raids, the policy of displacement, and the use of weapons against the intifadah.

Abu 'Ammar affirmed that he is not a terrorist and that he renounces terrorism, adding: I am a struggler and no one can prevent us from trying to regain our occupied lands. He announced the start of donations in gold in Kuwait and the Arab world. He said that a Kuwaiti woman made the first donation in gold in 1936.

'Arafat warned that Israel is preparing to carry out a war scenario in southern Lebanon in order to end the intifadah-created crisis, pointing out that the Lebanese 6th Brigade's movements in southern Lebanon over the past 10 days are a clear indication of that scenario. 'Arafat affirmed that the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territiories represented by the PLO are waging the fiercest political battle. He said there are Israeli attempts to assassinate Palestinian leaders inside and outside the occupied territories.

'Arafat reviewed recent political changes on the Palestinian, Arab, and international levels, stressing the importance of the Palestinian move. He said if we do not become part of these changes, these changes will be at our expense. Regarding positions adopted by Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement], 'Arafat stressed that this movement is part of the Palestinian factions operating inside and outside the occupied territories, pointing out that it constitutes a part of the Palestinian leadership outside the occupied territories and that there is coordination with it inside the occupied territories through Fatah.

Calls for 'More Steadfastness'

JN0703183989 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] In a special appeal today, PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat called on the inhabitants of Nabulus city and all citizens in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to show more steadfastness and perseverance. He told them: With your sacrifices, pain, and struggle, you are drawing the map of the free homeland on the atlas of the existing reality, whether the enemies like it or not. In a message on the 16th month of the intifadah [uprising], 'Arafat asserted that the occupation has gone on forever, that the bells of freedom have tolled, and that the intifadah has aggravated the enemy isolation on the international level and unmasked its real face.

In his message, 'Arafat said that the entire international situation, beginning with the USSR and the PRC, passing through the Western European states and Japan, and ending with the nonaligned, Islamic, and African states, constitutes an important, effective force in moving the events and drawing the future of the region, despite the enemy's arrogance and intransigence.

Habash Pledges Armed Struggle, Criticizes 'Arafat

JN0703131089 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1210 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Louis Faris dispatch from Damascus]

[Text] On the occasion of the beginning of the 15th month of the intifadah [uprising], PFLP leader Dr George Habash held a news conference here. He pledged that the PFLP will continue and even escalate its military operations against the Israeli occupiers. Habash charged that Yasir 'Arafat has thrown overboard the Algiers Palestine National Council [PNC] resolutions, especially the emphasis on the continuation of armed struggle. Habash stressed that no resolution among those adopted in Algiers or elsewhere stressed the existence of a truce with Israel on the Lebanese borders. He added

that there is no resolution at all that stresses or calls for confederal unity among Israel, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon. Habash also stressed that the PNC recognized only Resolutions 242 and 338, and this does not mean recognition of the existence of Israel on the land of Palestine.

Habash called on 'Arafat to immediately stop his gratuitous concessions because these create confusion and adversely affect the intifadah. He also voiced his support for President Mikhail Gorbachev's plan on the international peace conference.

Regarding Syrian-Palestinian relations, Habash said: I regret to say there is no progress in this. Nevertheless, we in the PLO will not change our opinion about the importance of Syrian-Palestinian relations and the need to provide the highest level of positive relations between the PLO and Syria.

Asked his opinion about Salman Rushdie's "The Satanic Verses," Habash declined to comment and said: We have enough problems.

Abu Sharif Urges UN To Appoint 'Special Envoy'

JN0703154389 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1350 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Doha, 7 Mar (WAKH)—Bassam Abu Sharif, information adviser to the chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, has called on the UN Security Council to adopt operative steps designed to reduce the crimes being perpetrated against the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories on a daily basis by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and his government.

At a press conference held here at the Palestinian embassy today, Abu Sharif asked UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to appoint a special envoy for occupied Palestine as soon as possible to closely follow Israeli crimes being perpetrated against the Palestinian people. This envoy should also submit a report to the UN Security Council on these crimes, which are uglier than all the crimes committed by the fascists.

Abu Sharif appealed to the EEC Council of Ministers, which has a firsthand knowledge of these crimes, to hold a special session to discuss the issue of practical steps that Europe can take to end these crimes.

The information adviser to the chairman of the PLO Executive Committee urged Israeli peace forces to continue their activities in cooperation with the Palestinians, upholding the slogan of "Yes to the Palestinians' right to self-determination and to the independent Palestinian state, and no to occupation."

Abu Sharif asked the UK Government to take operative steps that fall in harmony with the principles on the defense of human rights and to those on the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, especially after the visit made to occupied Palestine by William Waldegrave, UK minister of state at the Foreign Office.

Bassam Abu Sharif voiced the hope that the U.S. Middle East policy will fall in line with principles announced by U.S. President George Bush during his election campaign—the principles of justice and those pertaining to the defense of the human rights issue and the peoples' rights to self-determination and independence.

Abu Sharif also affirmed the need to crystallize operative steps that fall in harmony with the international community's will. These steps should include the announcement of an initiative that ends first and foremost the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories. This initiative should also bring about the holding of negotiations within the framework of an international conference to establish a comprehensive and just peace through the establishment of two states on the Palestinian territory and also through international guarantees for the security of all states in the region.

Abu Sharif added: "We accept a demilitarized Palestinian state provided that all states of the region, including Israel, are demilitarized."

Abu Sharif pointed out that the U.S-Palestinian dialogue will continue to discuss a host of issues on the Middle East conflict and details of the Palestinian initiative. He expressed the hope that the dialogue will proceed more rapidly, displaying a serious search for tangible steps to end the violations and crimes being committed against the Palestinian people and bring about a recognition of their legitimate national rights.

Abu Sharif affirmed that the decision to launch the dialogue has an important political significance represented by a recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He added that the launching of the dialogue also means that no solution to the problem can be found without the PLO and Israel.

Bassam Abu Sharif went on to say that meetings held between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and his Soviet counterpart Eduard Shevardnadze in Vienna, as well as his meeting with the EC troika entrusted with studying the situation in the Middle East, are highly positive developments that confirm that the Middle East conflict and the Palestine question have become priority issues for world public opinion. He stressed that all issues can be handled at the negotiating table within the framework of an international conference, including regional economic cooperation if the international parties concerned headed by the United States and the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict accept UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, renounce occupation and work to terminate it, and accept the Palestinian people's right to establish their state, affirming that the establishment of that state would be a factor of stability in the Middle East.

Abu Sharif reiterated that the PLO will adhere to peace regardless of the Israeli stand and indicated that 64 percent of Israelis now support negotiations with the PLO. He added that Shamir will one day find his stand diametrically opposed to that of Israeli public opinion, which will support peace.

Bassam Abu Sharif affirmed anew that the USSR will not restore its relations with Israel until the latter recognizes the PLO or agrees to attend an international conference attended by the PLO in its capacity as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

Concluding his press conference, Abu Sharif described the Israeli military escalation against the Palestinian people of the occupied Arab territories as crazy and said that what are described by Israel as plastic bullets are actually explosive and lethal metallic bullets coated with rubber that have so far martyred 631.

Abu Sharif also affirmed that the iron will of the Palestinian people will continue to confront the ironfist of Israel.

Paper Reports Mosad Anti-U.S. Operation

JN0503153689 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 4 Mar 89 p 1

[Text] AL-ITTIHAD has learned that Palestinian security organs have received important information about a large sabotage operation that the Israeli intelligence service, Mosad, is currently preparing against a U.S. establishment in West Germany. Fictitious Palestinian quarters will then claim responsibility for this operation to undermine the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue and the European understanding of the Palestinian question.

Palestinian security sources in Beirut have revealed to AL-ITTIHAD that this information also deals with new plans to assassinate several Palestinian figures in some East European countries. Mosad groups have arrived in some European capitals for this purpose over the past 2 weeks.

Hawatimah Criticizes U.S. 'Ignorance' in Mideast

PM0203160989 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 1-7 Mar 89 p 25

[Interview with DFLP Secretary General Nayif Hawatimah in connection with the U.S. Defense Department report on terrorist groups, by Salih Qallab—date and place not given]

[Text] [Qallab] The U.S. Pentagon includes the DFLP among what it termed terrorist movements. What is your opinion?

[Hawatimah] U.S. policy, with its ignorance of the Middle East, is based on organized state terrorism against the Palestinian people and the other Arab peoples. This is reflected in its support for the Israeli policy of repression and expansion in the occupied territories. The recent U.S. veto in the Security Council is perhaps a major indication of the hostile position, which has continued for 40 years against our people and our Arab nation. In view of our firm position among the ranks of our people, who a few days ago celebrated the anniversary of our front's launch as a Palestinian national day, we in the DFLP emphasized a fixed fact for which we are internationally known, namely, that we reject all forms of terrorism, and that history has never recorded against us, in over 20 years, any terrorist or individual operations anywhere in the world outside the occupied Palestinian land.

From our ideological position, we consider that the Palestinian people must rely on their organized collective work and on their own arms to liberate their homeland. They also must reject individual show operations, no matter how huge, because they constitute an obstacle to their struggle and distort their world reputation. And here I confirm that it was the DFLP which was behind the 1974 PNC resolution that condemned all forms of terrorism in accordance with UN resolutions and international legitimacy.

[Qallab] They say that the front is working to topple some Arab regimes by revolutionary means.

[Hawatimah] That talk is false and baseless and violates the facts. It is known that the DFLP is working among the Palestinian people's ranks only and has no extensions inside any Arab states. We do not interfere in the Arab states' affairs, and we concentrate our work within our people's ranks only. Once again I say that over 20 years nothing has been recorded against us to the effect that we carried out any act against the Arab regime.

[Qallab] They also accuse you of supporting the Soviets and of being hostile to U.S. policy in the region.

[Hawatimah] That is an old recital whose objective is to justify the occupation and colonialist presence in the region. In fact the PLO, in all its groups and through all PNC resolutions, considers the Soviet Union a friendly state, because it supports our people's cause and because it is for an international conference and this people's right to self-determination. Whereas over 40 years we have experienced nothing from Washington but rejection and complete bias toward our enemy. The policy that governs our stances in the DFLP and the PLO in general is based on the principle that all those who are not against us are for us. And since the Soviet Union is not against us, it is for us.

PNC Speaker on 'Uprising,' Resistance, Peace

JN0803084289 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic 6 Mar 89 p 4

[By Nabil Nammurah]

[Excerpts] Shaykh 'Abd al-Hamid al-Sa'ih, speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], has stressed the need to continue all types of fedayeen action as legitimate

self-defense and resistance against the Israeli occupation until the Palestinian people achieve all their rights and establish their independent state on their soil. In a statement to AL-ANBA', he said that Israel is still taking aggressive actions against the Palestinian people, who have the full right to resist this aggression with all means approved by the UN Charter, and that we should not ignore brutal Israeli actions against the Palestinian people and concentrate only on the Palestinian factions' efforts to resist and repulse this aggression against the Palestinian people.

The PNC speaker also said that the fedayeen actions represented in the blessed intifadah [uprising], which has erupted in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a result of the Palestinian people's sufferings from the Zionist enemy, will never stop unless the Palestinian people achieve their goal of eliminating the occupation and establishing their independent state.

Al-Sa'ih said that the Palestinian leadership still hopes that the new era in the United States—the era of President Bush—will be more accurate in its assessment of the factors that have led to the intifadah as well as the Palestinian people's position on the intifadah and also will persuade Israel to end its terrorising and torturing of the Palestinian people and demolishing houses under weak pretexts. He added that the U.S. Administration and the American people know well that these pretexts cannot justify the continuation of these actions, which are more severe even than the fascist and Nazi actions.

Al-Sa'ih also expressed his hope that the new U.S. era will sympathize with the Palestinian people and achieve their goals by pressuring and persuading the Israeli authorities that their current policy will never lead to peace or security for them and that the best way is to agree to the convening of an effective international conference, which can achieve for the Palestinian people and others an honorable, meaningful, and secure life. He also said that the fedayeen operations carried out by certain Palestinian factions should be viewed as self-defense and resistance, because Israel is still taking aggressive actions against the Palestinian people, who have the right to resist this aggression with all means authorized by the UN Charter. [passage omitted]

Al-Sa'ih added that the Palestinian intifadah has become so determined that it cannot stop until it achieves its goals. Therefore, he said, the Arab countries should implement their financial commitments to enable the intifadah to continue. He also affirmed that the PLO had met all its commitments to employees affected by Jordan's decision to disengage ties between the West Bank and Jordan which was announced by the Jordanian monarch during the first half of last year. [passage omitted]

PLO Sets Up Donation Collection Committee

LD0603212889 Kuwait KUNA in English 1525 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, March 6 (KUNA)—The PLO office here Monday issued a decision forming a committee to collect jewels and ornaments from the public to support Palestinian steadfastness in the occupied territories.

The decision, carrying signature of PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat, pointed out that collection of the donations will be done in cooperation with popular organizations in Kuwait. The 17-man committee is headed by secretary of the Palestine National Fund Khayr al-Din Abu al-Jabin.

Algeria

Egypt's 'Abd al-Majid Continues Political Talks

LD0603120989 Algiers APS in English 1019 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Algiers 6 Mar (APS)—Algerian-Egyptian political talks continued in plenary session between delegations of the two countries, led by Foreign Minister Boualem Bessaieh and 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, vice president of the Council of Ministers and foreign minister of Egypt, after tete a tete talks. This working session was devoted to the examination of prospects and frames of bilateral cooperation in various fields and an exchange of informations and analyses on a number of topical political questions. The two ministers also examined the present situation of the Palestinian cause under all its dimension. Moreover, the two sides exchanged views on the situation prevailing in the Arab world and prospects of the reinforcement and closing of Arab ranks around the Palestinian cause and the intifadah [uprising] of the Palestinian people in occupied territories.

Conveys Message to Bendjedid

LD0603230689 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Excerpts] 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Egypt, delivered a message to His Excellency President Bendjedid from Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. Present at the were the foreign minister, the director of the Presidential Office, and the ambassadors of the two countries.

Upon leaving the presidential headquarters, the head of Egyptian diplomacy talked about the issues discussed during his meeting with his excellency the president.

[Begin recording] ['Abd al-Majid] [Passage omitted] This was an opportunity to listen to his excellency the president talk about important issues of interest to the two friendly countries and it enabled the opening of horizons for fruitful cooperation in the future. We also talked about Arab and African issues which are of interest to the two countries. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified correspondent] Your Excellency the Minister, allow me to ask a question in the same context concerning bilateral relations: How do you view bilateral relations between Algeria and Egypt within the framework of the two unions?

['Abd al-Majid] Naturally, the Maghreb Union and the Arab Cooperation Council are regional groupings which are condoned by the Arab League and its charter. Their goal is to coordinate between neighboring states. There is no contradiction between them at all. On the contrary, every Arab meeting or grouping gives more strength to the Arabs. I consequently believe that this is an obvious and understood matter. We will all endeavor for more meetings and rapprochement within the framework of the two groupings.

Makes Statement, Departs

LD0803110689 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] At the end of 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister's visit, a document was signed to form a higher Algerian-Egyptian committee. It was signed by Foreign Minister Boualem Bessaieh and by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister. The committee will hold its first meeting in the coming months but will be preceded by meetings of experts in various spheres.

Before his departure, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid held a news conference at the airport VIP lounge. He assessed the results of his visit to Algeria and the prospects for bilateral cooperation.

In reply to journalists' questions the Egyptian foreign minister touched on a number of Arab and international issues.

[Begin recording] ['Abd al-Majid] It gives me pleasure to begin this news conference by expressing my pleasure and happiness at being in Algeria—the great Arab country. During this visit I enjoyed the opportunity of meeting his excellency the president of the republic, Chadli Bendjedid, and I had the honor of delivering a message to his excellency from his brother President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. I also met with the prime minister and senior officials. We held several important meetings to promote Egyptian-Algerian relations to a new level. God willing, the coming days will witness aspects of this development in Egptian-Algerian relations. God willing, I will be going back to Cairo with a feeling of relief and satisfaction, wishing fraternal Algeria progress and success. God leads us to success. Thank you.

[Unidentified journalist] How can Egypt promote the peace process in the Middle East?

['Abd al-Majid] Egypt seeks a just and comprehensive peace. Egypt will spare no effort to achieve the peace we all seek. In order for peace to be achieved the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian stand began here in the city of Algiers in the middle of November of last year. Since that date until today the peace process is proceeding with firm and strong steps. We all sense the support and backing that is being given to the Palestinian issue. In view of this, the international conference should be held within the UN framework. The PLO must take part. It is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We and the Arab and Palestinian brothers are proceeding side by side toward promoting the peace process and the meetings which took place in Cairo some weeks ago were aimed at strengthening this process.

I do not say that all the issues have been settled but we have before us a long road which we must tread with planning, study, and determination. The Palestinian people must gain their rights and the Palestinian uprising must make its mark. The positive develpments achieved have surfaced and been felt by all of us in the short period of time that has elapsed since the beginning of the uprising at end of 1987 until today. [end recording]

After this news conference Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid left Algiers. He was seen off by Foreign Minister Boualem Bessaieh.

Iranian Oil Minister Arrives for Consultations

LD0803101689 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Iranian Petroleum Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh, arrived in Algiers at noon today. [passage omitted]

In a statement at Houari Boumedienne International Airport, the Iranian petroleum minister pointed out that this visit comes at the invitation of his Algerian counterpart within the framework of the exchanges of consultations between Algeria and Iran. Gholamreza Aqazadeh added that this visit precedes the convening of the committee comprising eight OPEC member states and the discussion on the means of cooperation with non-OPEC oil producers.

Egypt

Sudan's Al-Mirghani Telephones Mubarak

NC0803145389 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1436 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received a telephone call from Ahmad al-Mirghani, chairman of the Sudanese State Council, at noon today. Al-Mirghani and the president discussed bilateral relations, the developments in fraternal Sudan, and a number of issues of common interest.

Al-Mahjub Rejects Opposition's Letter, Memorandum

JN0603212989 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 5 Mar 89 p 6

[By Mahmud Mu'awwad, 'Abd al-Jawwad 'Ali, and Sharif al-'Abd]

[Excerpt] During yesterday's session of the People's Assembly under Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub, the majority of the members rejected the opposition's demand to hold a special session to investigate the proceedings of the two previous sessions during which the assembly discussed the questions posed to the interior minister. The purpose of the special session was to discuss whether the two sessions conformed with the provisions of the Constitution, the law, and the parliamentary statutes and tradition.

At the beginning of the session, Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub said: I received a letter signed by Yasin Siraj al-Din, representative of the Al-Wafd's parliamentary body; and Ibrahim Shukri, representative of the Socialist Labor Party's parliamentary body, in which they asked to hold a special session of the People's Assembly in accordance with Article 269 of the statutes in order to look into the proceedings of the two previous sessions—which were held to discuss the questions posed to the interior minister—and to see if these proceedings conformed with the provisions of the Constitution, with the law, and with the parliamentary statutes and tradition.

Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub pointed out that the memorandum attached to the letter says that the speaker did not give the members who asked the questions the right to hold discussions, he made them ask their questions during an evening session so that the newspapers could not publish the proceedings of the session, and he did not use his powers to prevent the interior minister from ridiculing the opposition. Instead, the memorandum says, he allowed the minister to display tapes inside the assembly in an unprecedented manner, and he tried to legitimize these procedures when he sought the majority's approval of these procedures.

Dr al-Mahjub said that the memorandum also says that the speaker exploited the trouble which took place in the assembly in order to win the majority's approval of expelling parliament member Tal'at Arslan and referring him to the ethics committee without referring the government's representatives, who beat opposition leader Ibrahim Shukri, to the same committee.

Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub asked: Will the assembly agree to hold a special session? The majority did not agree and refused to hold the special session.

The opposition members protested and a clamor occurred among the opposition's representatives. They expressed their opposition to the procedures and sought the final say of the statutes. But Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub said: I can tell the esteemed opposition that it fully uses its rights inside the assembly and I did not try at all to deprive it of these rights. The whole assembly knows this fact. I have never prevented the opposition from speaking. I always give more time. Ibrahim Shukri spoke 18 times on one law; the opposition has never before enjoyed such freedom.

The opposition continued their protest and its members waved the statutes. But Dr al-Mahjub rejected the protest and asked 'Isam Radi, minister of works and water resources to answer the members' questions on the assembly's agenda. [passage omitted]

People's Assembly Disqualifies Wafd Deputy

JN0703182589 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 6 Mar 89 p 1

[Text] The People's Assembly yesterday decided to disqualify the membership of Tal'at Arslan, an assembly deputy for the Wafd party, because he attacked Interior Minister Zaki Badr when he was delivering his statement before the Assembly in the Monday, 20 February, session.

In the session, which was attended by a number of deputies, the prime minister, and ministers, the assembly heard a report by the ethics committee. They also heard a discussion in which a number of deputies from the opposition and the National Democratic Party took part. Tal'at Arslan was absent from the session.

Membership in Arab Labor Organization Restored
NC0603134989 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Rabat, 6 Mar (MENA)—The Arab Labor Organization has approved Egypt's resuming membership in the organization. This occurred today during the procedural session of the Arab labor conference in Rabat under the chairmanship of Hassan Abbadi, Moroccan minister of employment.

The conference secretariat conveyed the decision to 'Asim 'Abd al-Haqq, Egyptian manpower and training minister, at his residence in the Moroccan capital. The conference secretariat officials then accompanied 'Abd al-Haqq to the opening session of the Arab labor conference.

The Egyptian manpower and training minister stated that the resolution regarding Egypt's return to the organization was approved by all member states except Libya, which expressed reservations.

'Abd al-Majid Returns from Algeria, Comments
NC0703220989 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, returned to Cairo this evening after a 3-day visit to Algeria. His excellency stated that he had delivered a message from President Husni Mubarak to Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid. He described his meeting with the Algerian president as amicable and said that they had discussed bilateral, Arab, and African issues of mutual interest.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid announced that he had conveyed an invitation from President Husni Mubarak to Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid to visit Egypt, and that he is carrying a similar invitation from the Algerian president to President Mubarak to visit Algeria. He noted that it has been agreed to set the dates of these two visits later.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that Egypt hails the establishment of the Arab Maghreb Union and considers it a notable addition to the Arab effort. He declared that every Arab grouping serves the interests of the Arab nation.

Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid remarked tht he had briefed Algerian officials on the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] and that they welcomed it. He said that they had also exchanged views on cooperation between the two groupings, and added that the Arab Maghreb Union and the GCC both serve the good of the Arab nation and have been established on the basis of the Arab League Charter. He said he hoped that there will be cooperation between the Arab Maghreb Union and the ACC as soon as possible.

The deputy prime minister and foreign minister said that the Egyptian-Algerian talks focused mainly on the Palestinian issue. He also said that he had briefed Algerian officials on the results of the meetings in Cairo.

The foreign minister said that he and his Algerian counterpart have signed an agreement to form an Egyptian-Algerian higher joint committee to discuss bilateral relations, which will hold its first session in Cairo soon. He reported that meetings of subcommittees will be held before this session in order to discuss all issues of bilateral interest.

Butrus Ghali Leaves for Ethiopia, Uganda 6 Mar
NC0603081589 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, departed from Cairo this morning for visits to Ethiopia and Uganda. Ghali disclosed that he will deliver a message from President Husni Mubarak to Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile Mariam. He will also head the Egyptian delegation to the first joint Egyptian-Ethiopian committee session that will prepare a framework to bolster bilateral ties in various spheres. [passage omitted]

Qandil, UK Minister Inspect Sinai Coal Mine
NC0803091389 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0755 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Chemist 'Abd al-Hadi Qandil, minister of petroleum and mineral resources, and Cecil Parkison, British secretary of state for energy, left Cairo for Sinai this morning to inspect coal mines in the Al-Magharah area.

The two ministers will review the progress in developing the mine—which the British Government and the Geological Survey Authority is helping with—so that it can be used to generate electricity.

Libya

GPC Criticizes Bureau for Foreign Liaison
LD0703163489 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 1108 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Observations of the Secretariat of the General People's Congress regarding the functions of the People's Committee of the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison, read by an unidentified speaker at the proceedings of the General People's Congress in Banghazi—live]

[Text] The People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison held 26 meetings in 1988. There was a lack of accuracy in numbering the minutes of the

meetings, which delays the arrival of such minutes at the Secretariat of the General People's Congress [GPC]. Regarding the nature of the work of the People's Committee of the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison, it was noted that absenteeism by members of the committee at the said meetings was high. Through a follow-up by the Secretariat of the General People's Congress and the report of the People's Follow-up Apparatus, the following observations were made:

1. Secretaries of people's committees were not named to the people's bureaus [embassies] in the following states: Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania, Suriname, West Germany, and South Korea.

2. Secretaries of people's committees were selected for some bureaus, while the people's committees at the following bureaus, were not entrusted with the work of the people's bureaus: DPRK, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Burkina Faso, Togo, Guinea, Congo, Botswana, Bangladesh, the Soviet Union, Austria, Malta, Greece, Portugal, and France.

3. It was observed that there were more than 70 officials working at the people's bureau abroad who do not fit the conditions stipulated in the provisions of the law on people working abroad, which was adopted by the General People's Committee, particularly with regard to the following: Libyans married to non-Arabs who were sent abroad; the continuation of sending people abroad for more than 4 years; sending abroad people under grade six in the seniority ladder; sending out people who had not returned to the great Jamahiriyah for the required period.

4. No interest was shown in the international organizaitons and bodies; and there was some delay in the payment of annual dues to these organizations and bodies—a matter which has negatively affected the role of the great Jamahiriyah in these organizations and international forums.

5. The majority of people's bureaus and fraternal bureaus did not perform their roles fully—they lack registers and records and did not classify or properly organize documents pertaining to expenditures. There was a delay in closing accounts, which led to a delay in the preparation of the final state account. Add to this the fact that no deductions were made from the salaries of those working at these bureaus, for stamp duties were not deducted expenditures—a matter which is regarded as a violation of the provisions of the Law No 64 of 1973.

6. Maintenance work was carried out at some people's bureaus without taking into account the technical requirements and bases and at a cost exceeding the actual charges. There was an exaggeration of administrative expenditures, including postal and telephone expenditures, without consideration of what has been decided by the basic people's conferences on the necessity to rationalize and limit expenditures.

7. There was a delay regarding commenting on the book which was written by two journalists—based on information from Oliver North, a member of the U.S. National Security Council and one of the persons responsible—about the planning and carrying out of the U.S. aggression against the great Jamahiriyah and the house of the brother leader in mid-April 1986.

8. There was a weakness in coordination between the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and the General People's Committee for Information and Culture with regard to replying to the media campaigns hostile to the great Jamahiriyah and the great leader of its revolution.

9. The right of the great Jamahiriyah to the Gulf of Sidra was not presented in the best form in the final communique of the Arab emergency summit held in Algiers.

10. There was a lack of interest in nominations for awards given by international organizations, especially the nomination for the award of human rights on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the International Declaration of Human Rights.

11. The brother secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison did not attend the reception or the subsequent talks with the president of the Republic of Nigeria when he visited the great Jamahiriyah on 4 July 1988.

12. The brother secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison did not attend the meeting of the Arab emergency summit held in Algiers.

Liaison Member Answers Criticism

LD0703203889 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 1121 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Address by the secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau at the General People's Congress in Banghazi—live]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] I will deal with the points which were raised in the order they were read. Regarding the meeting of the committee—as it was read to you, the committee met 26 times last year—the first meeting was held on 3 January and the last on 25 December. In addition there were the weekly regular meetings held every Sunday when there is a quorum. Due to the nature of the committee we often did not have a quorum. Then there are the so-called consultations which were no fewer in number than the actual meetings. Following our agreement with the Secretariat of the General People's Congress, reports have been sent on the meetings. These reports are sent every month. [passage omitted]

Regarding the tasks of the secretary of the committee, his duty is to scrutinize. As for the other remarks, particularly those raised by the People's Follow-up Apparatus, these are correct. In fact, we in the People's Committee

of the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau are the source of such facts and information. We do not disagree with the remarks of the Apparatus. I believe they are correct. In fact, I reaffirm that they are correct. If I have to comment on them, then my aim is to explain some of the circumstances surrounding them—for example, the question of not entrusting secretaries of people's committees with the bureaus which were mentioned.

Here I want to clarify one fact. The exchange of diplomatic representation, the level of the top man at the mission, depends on many factors: the importance of the political and economic relations with that state; the level of diplomatic representation of that state with the Jamahiriyah; how recently our mission was established in that state; and the time required for nominating our representatives. It is a fact that the top man should be an ambassador or a bureau secretary. The Apparatus was correct, but in addition to the bureaus which the Apparatus mentioned we had other bureaus without secretaries. In this case, the man deputizing for him is entrusted with the work. [passage omitted]

As the Apparatus stated, there are no people's committees at the bureaus which were mentioned. We do not object to that. I explained this before at previous session—at least once—and to other concerned authorities the following facts, whether you accept them or not. This is all I have to say on this subject. The first fact is that the People's Committee of the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau review the lists of names of those who are elected and who satisfy the conditions and they are distributed among the various bureaus and missions.

Staff shortages were made good as far as possible—but a shortage still exists among those working at the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau. Second, we do not believe, regarding the bureaus abroad, that a people's committee is an aim in itself. I believe that the requirements of the work determine the work at the people's bureaus. Third, the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau is part—in fact, a very small unit—of this society. I beg the Secretariat of the General People's Congress not to ask me for something which the Congress itself [words indistinct].

The other comment—that there are more than 70 officials working at people's bureaus abroad who do not satisfy some of the provisions of the law relating to those working abroad. This is also correct. I only want to explain some facts—these I have already explained to the brothers at the People's Follow-up Apparatus, and I believe that they have listed them in their report faithfully. Those who were mentioned—the 70 officials—include only 18 officials who belong to the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison. In the letter we received from the Apparatus, it was mentioned that those 18 violated the provisions because they have stayed at their posts for more than 4 years. Our reply to the People's Follow-up Apparatus stated that those 18 are secretaries of bureaus and the law relating to the people working abroad do not restrict secretaries to a definite period. [passage omitted] As for the other officials, they belong to other authorities. Most of the latter do not comply with the law relating to those working abroad.

As for the lack of interest shown to international organizations and the delay in the payment of contributions, I cannot definitely say that the first part is correct. I want to outline the role of the People's Bureau with regard to international organizations—to establish relations with them, to attend their meetings, and to cooperate with them. Our attendances at such meetings were regular and we have always participated actively; we were not absent from any meeting of the UN General Assembly, the OAU, or the Arab League. [passage omitted] As for the second part, the delay in the payment of subscriptions, this is correct although its position [as heard] is incorrect. The People's Foreign Liaison Bureau is not the authority responsible for making the payments. [passage omitted] I beg you to evaluate issues as they deserve. I do not believe that those responsible for the delay did it deliberately; they had their own reasons which we all know. [passage omitted]

Regarding the closure of accounts, as I said to you last year the issue does not concern the People's Bureau. As for maintainance and the postal and telephone expenditure, I regret to say that I don't have the information to give an explanation. [passage omitted]

As for the point concerning what two journalists attributed to a U.S. official [Oliver North], I do not know what is meant by the word "delay." I know that delay becomes an issue if it results in an opportunity lost. The way I see things, at the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau and in the international arena, work is often done with haste. As I see it, merely listening to the news is not a justification for forming opinions because daily there are books and papers being published dealing with various issues—especially in the Western world—and if there are any questions about them, they should be raised with the publishers or authors. I think it is difficult for states to take definite political stances without closely scrutinizing what is written in the press. This is not to belittle the press. I know the magnitude and seriousness of what the press writes about. I am not asking you to ignore what the papers write, but I want to say that it is dangerous to adopt a political stand or take measures in light of what is being written without scrutinizing the latter. [passage omitted]

At any rate, regarding the incident, I want to say that the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau took a measure and communicated with other states on the basis of information which journalists attributed to a former officia. Even if the information was correct it did not add to the repulsiveness of the crime which was committed. When the United States attacked our towns and our leader, it used every means to collect the data which enabled it to realize its objective. The measure which the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison took—and I have no personal claim on that—regarding the book was sufficient;

we were not late in that. The book only arrived at the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison after the latter had taken the measure which I referred to. In short, I do not believe that there was any delay. [passage omitted]

As for coordination on information, we at the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau might be somewhat negligent, but I do not believe that those working in information were negligent toward us—I mean the People's Committee for Information. Our attempts to coordinate continue and our contacts are daily. [passage omitted]

Regarding the final communique of the Arab emergency summit in Algiers, what has been said is correct. The People's Committee of the People's Foreign Liaison Bureau was not present there. Thank you. [applause]

Sudanese Prime Minister Addresses GPC 7 Mar

LD0703230189 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 1840 GMT 7 Mar 89

["Address" by Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi on 7 March at the General People's Congress in Benghazi—live]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, and the compassionate. God's blessing and benedictions be upon his Prophet.

My brother, the secretary general of the General People's Congress, my brothers and sisters, may God's peace, prayers and blessings be upon you.

I am very grateful to you for allowing me to address this gathering which forms the heart and the mind of our people in the Jamahiriyah. I congratulate you for convening this general congress. for the advanced work for the people's direct authority, for the economic development which is now witnessing the transformation from official ownership to popular ownership, and for the creation of the Maghreb Arab Union, which we hope will effectively contribute to the removal of all ugly forms of division and fragmentation. God's hand is filled with unity. [passage omitted]

Let me talk to you for awhile about your brothers in Sudan. The size of Sudan is like that of a whole continent. Its geographical surface equals that of India; there are 14 rivers in Sudan; there are 2 billion [as heard] arable fields in Sudan; and there are more than 60 million heads of cattle. What is more important than these material bases is that Sudan is a bridge between our Arab Middle East—via the Red Sea—and our Maghreb. Sudan is a bridge between the West, East, and the Horn of Africa. It is a bridge between Arab Africa and Black Africa, especially because Arab Africa stretches through the Red Sea to the Gulf. There are those who say that the eastern border of greater Africa is not situated in the Red Sea but in the Gulf.

Sudan, with these factors and possibilities, is exposed. It is exposed because the tyrannical colonial forces want to tear, divide, and break into pieces this possibility, this bridging, and this geographical, cultural, historical, and civilizational link. Thus, Sudan has been the victim of these dominating tyrannical foreign colonial aims.

Part of the current restlessness in Sudan is (?legitimate). We are exercising a political development to discover channels for democratic expression adapted to Sudan's conditions. However, despite the objectives of this restlessness to develop and adapt the political and trade unionist institutions and the military-civilian relationship—for the sake of a unified popular action—there are some who want to take advantage of this restlessness to impede the Sudanese march and implement foreign schemes which ban Sudan from its civilizational and pan-Arab role. The Sudanese people are aware of the dangers of these conditions and will defeat them, God willing, due to its awareness, God's help, and the support of its population everywhere. We strongly support those who respond to the call of truth and understand the pan-Arab dangers surrounding us. They are ready to face up to these frenzied conspiracies against us.

We, in Sudan, are looking for political and economic direction in order to secure the rights and capacities of the people, independence from foreign dominance, and Arab unity. With Arab unity, we hope our nation will solve its problems, inferiority complex, stagnation, usurpation, exploitation, and all the evils which hit it and were imposed on it by its enemies.

At the end of my speech, I reiterate my congratulations to you for this work and I pray God Almighty will protect our cooperation, our unity, and solidarity so that we can achieve together these supreme goals through which we will revive our nation which has gigantic material, moral, ethical, and spiritual potentialities. If our nation can resume its historical role through these potentialities it will achieve for mankind a great glory and progress. May God's peace and mercy be upon you. [applause]

Meets With Al-Qadhdhafi

LD0803104989 Tripoli JANA in English 0830 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Banghazi, 8 Mar JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of revolution received the prime minister of sisterly Sudan, Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi.

Present at this meeting were Col. Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir and Mr. Nasir al-Din al-Hadi al-Mahdi, member of the [word indistinct] of Sudan Umma Party

Departs After Visit

LD0803093989 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0925 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Banghazi, 8 Mar (JANA)—Brother Sadiq al-Mahdi, prime minister of Sudan, left Banghazi this morning after a visit to the great Jamahiriyah, during

which he attended part of the proceedings of the 15th session of the general People's Congress. Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir saw brother Sadiq al-Mahdi off at Baninah International Airport. [passage omitted]

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Somali Naval Officer

LD0503213789 Tripoli Television Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution has received Commodore Sa'id Abdullah 'Umar, commander of the Somali Navy and coastal defense, and his delegation, who are visiting the great Jamahiriyah these days. [Video shows shots of audience]

Morocco

Hassan Ratifies 1972 Border Treaty With Algeria

LD0303175689 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 1222 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Speech by King Hassan to mark Throne Day 3 March; place not given—live or recorded]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] In 1972 Morocco and Algeria signed a treaty on the demarcation of their borders. Algeria implemented and ratified this treaty. Past circumstances forced Morocco to pause. Morocco took part in the operation on the demarcation of the borders.

Today, we live in a period which is greatly different from the past. Our region's future is set. No one among us has a right to put it in danger. We thought considerably and we took into consideration all the points stipulated in the past. We have decided to ratify the treaty on borders signed by Morocco and Algeria in 1972. Thus on our part we have not neglected anything so that the foundations for the birth of our Arab Maghreb are completed. [passage omitted]

Officials Renew Allegiance to King on Throne Day

LD0603150889 Rabat MAP in English 1310 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Marrakech March 6 (MAP)—The festivities marking Throne Day commemorating this year the 28th anniversary of the enthronment of King Hassan II wound up Saturday afternoon by the traditional ceremony of allegiance during which Moroccan Minister of the Interior Driss Basri, his close aides, the walies, governors, and delegations from all the Moroccan prefectures and provinces renewed to King Hassan II the oath of allegiance.

The sovereign, flanked by Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed and Prince Moulay Rachid, thus recieved the allegiance of the delegations representing the seven Moroccan economic regions.

The sovereign later on received the congratulations and good wishes of the walies and governors, delegates of the Moroccan community living abroad and representatives of the inhabitants of Sebta [Ceuta] and Melilla (two Moroccan northern cities still under Spanish rule) led by Omar Doudouh.

King Hassan II also received United Arab Emirates Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources Mani ibn Sa'id al-'Utayba.

Members of the Moroccan Cabinet, speakers of the House of Representatives, advisers to the sovereign, and high ranking officers also extended to King Hassan II their congratulations on the occasion of the Throne Day.

Hassan Promotes Senior Military Officers

LD0603151389 Rabat MAP in English 1252 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Marrakech March 6 (MAP)—King Hassan II who was flanked by Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed, coordinator of the bureaux and services of the Royal Armed Forces (FAR) and by Prince Moulay Rachid, presided here Saturday at a ceremony during which a new batch of officiers was sworn in.

In an address he made on the occasion, the sovereign announced that he had baptized this new batch "the 20 August group", date of the revolution of the king and the people.

After the new officers were sworn in, the sovereign promoted a number of high ranking officers. Major-Colonels Abdelhaq Kadiri, Sourallah Benachir, Aziz Ouazzani and Zeriab Mustafa were thus promoted to the rank of general and Colonels Mohamed Belhaj, Noureddine Kanabi, Ahmed Harchi, Mansouri Mimoun and Abdelhaq Mdaouar were promoted to the rank of major-colonel.

The new batch of young officers includes graduates of Moroccan military schools such as the Royal Military Academy, the Royal Air School, the Royal Military Medical School, the Royal Navy School, the Royal Mounted Police School, and the Social Services Training School.

The 700 member batch includes 40 female officers.

Basri, French Official Discuss Cooperation

LD0603211689 Rabat MAP in Arabic 1530 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Marrakech, 6 Mar (MAP)—Mr Driss Basri, Moroccan minister of interior and information, conferred in Marrakech with Mr Thierry de Beauce, French secretary of state for foreign affairs in charge of international cultural cooperation. He is currently visiting Morocco. The two sides discussed projects of mutual interest in the field of

information. The talks also included the construction of a cultural center in Souira on the Atlantic Ocean. Mr Thierry de Beauce expressed interest in the construction of this center in this historic town.

Sudan

DUP Expresses 'Surprise' Over Al-Mahdi Statement

NC0703161889 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1445 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 7 Mar (MENA)—The Democratic Unionist Party [DUP], which is led by Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani, issued a statement today in response to Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's statement during his Sunday news conference in which he decided not to tender his government's resignation.

The statement expressed the DUP's surprise over the prime minister's remarks in his news conference. It emphasized that these remarks are incompatible with the articles of the phased working program proposed for the coming government that was signed by all the political parties and trade unions at the presidential palace on 4 March. Prime Minister al-Mahdi also signed the program in his capacity as leader of the Ummah Party.

The DUP statement said that the prime minister disregarded the phased program both in form and substance and ignored Article 2 therein, which explicitly called for the need to achieve peace by officially accepting the Sudanese peace initiative concluded on 16 November 1988.

The statement described Al-Mahdi's position as an attempt to obliterate the peace initiative and stressed that any party that failed to sign the phased program has no right to take part in the coming government, because such participation is conditional upon making a commitment to the phased program signed by all the political powers.

The DUP stressed its commitment to the phased program agreed upon and noted that it sees no justification for deviating from it, amending it, adding to it, or deleting from it. The statement also stressed that the DUP will not be part of any consultations to review what has been agreed on in the program. It also underlined the importance of strict adherence to the pahsed program.

The statement noted that the prime minister's statements were inconsistent with the phased program's call for the resignation of the government and for commitment to the agreed on phased program. The statement objected to the prime minister's unsuccessful beginning of not abiding by the phased program, which stipulated the need to follow a balanced foreign policy that is not involved in joining axes. The statement also called on the Sudanese prime minister to explain in detail his remark that the Egyptian president, in his statements, wanted to harm a certain party and benefit another party.

Trade Unions, Parties Comment on New Government

NC0803122389 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0950 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 8 Mar (MENA)—During a meeting this morning with the representatives of Sudanese trade unions, Mirghani al-Nasri, member of the Sudanese State Council, received a memorandum from trade unions in response to remarks made by Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi at his recent news conference, particularly those noting the trade union movement's commitment to suspend their strike and demands.

A MENA correspondent in Khartoum has learned that the memorandum includes a categorical denial that trade unions had declared their commitment to suspend strikes to any quarter.

The memorandum also outlines the way in which trade unions will participate in the next government. It reiterates that the unions' cooperation with the government is contingent upon the implementation of the seven-item phased program signed by all political powers last Thursday [2 March], particularly the adoption of a non-biased and balanced foreign policy, in addition to the commitment to the Sudanese peace agreement signed on 17 November.

Muhammad 'Uthman Jamma', chairman of the Sudanese Trade Union Federation, has stated that the unions cannot commit themselves to suspending strikes and demands. He said: As long as they work and produce, they have the right to make demands. Jamma' said that Al-Mahdi's news conference has created a new crisis.

In another development, the Sudanese Farmers Union issued a statement today saying that the union will begin a 5-day strike as of Monday [13 March], until the government responds to their demands. It is worth noting that the union had demanded the removal of differences in the salaries of agricultural and vocational workers, as well as job bottlenecks [al-ikhtinaqat al-wazifiyah].

The Islamic Front's Executive Bureau held a meeting last night under the chairmanship of Dr Hasan 'Abdallah al-Turabi, the front's secretary general. During the meeting, which lasted until midnight, the bureau decided not to take part in any new government formed according to the phased program, which bears no reference to Islamic laws. At a news conference today, Dr al-Turabi reiterated the front's refusal to sign the phased program unless Islamic laws were addended to it.

In another development, the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP] asserted that its participation in the government will be contingent upon not adding any items to the phased program, which had been signed by all trade unions and political parties, including Prime Minister al-Mahdi.

At a news conference today, Al-Zayn Hamid, member of the DUP's parliamentary group, announced that the meetings of the joint committee of the DUP and Ummah parties have stopped as a reaction to Al-Mahdi's recent remarks which had not been agreed upon.

Al-Turabi Rejects Al-Mahdi's Political Program

EA0703210089 Khartoum SUNA in English 1720 GMT 7 Feb 89

[Text] Khartoum, 7 Feb (SUNA)—The secretary general of the National Islamic Front (NIF), Dr Hasan 'Abdullah al-Turabi, stressed anew his refusal to sign the new political rescue programme signed by other political parties, including the Ummah Party and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) unless it (?includes) the application of shari'ah laws. In press statements, Dr al-Turabi said the positions of the NIF and Ummah parties towards participation in power with (?other) political forces (trade unions) and other nonpolitical organizations) were not far different.

Dr al-Turabi also said that consultations between his party and the Ummah Party around the shari'ah issue, the peace accord and the new ministerial formation were still under way. He further said that the political rescue programme in order to be a government programme should be passed by the Constituent Assembly (parliament). Dr al-Turabi pointed out that the current government is constitutionally still in power, since, he argued, the resignations of ministers which were submitted to the prime minister were not accepted yet.

'UKAZ Interviews Al-Turabi

PM0703163689 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 3 Mar 89 p 5

[Interview with Dr Hasan al-Turabi, deputy prime minister, foreign minister, and National Islamic Front leader, by Muhammad Mahjub; place, date not given]

[Text] [Mahjub] What is the [National] Islamic Front's [NIF] role in current events?

[Al-Turabi] Like all the other political forces, the NIF has issued a statement, appreciating the Armed Forces' demand that their necessary defense requirements be met. The questions being asked center primarily on the need to expand the government. If such an expansion entails the inclusion of the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP] in the government, the front does not oppose it, because it has already formed a government including the DUP. But the front does not agree to any government including union forces, because unions do not have any electoral power from the people and do not represent the masses in the field of political work.

Furthermore, the front does not agree to the inclusion of the leftist parties. Any such proposal will be unacceptable to the front. Moreover, the front will not accept any proposal leading to an indefinite freeze on Islamic legislation procedures.

[Mahjub] Are there any loyalty problems in the Army, as claimed by some foreign sources?

[Al-Turabi] At present the military ranks are united and solid and are not expected to lose their unity under these crucial circumstances. So the internal unity among military commanders is not expected to be undermined. However, it is believed that parties outside the Armed Forces could pose a threat to security in the south and the north. But as far as the Armed Forces are concerned, there are no fears. And of course the NIF still adheres to what the entire Sudanese people want; namely, adherence to the democratic system, which has proved wonderfully steadfast in the face of the security attacks made on it.

[Mahjub] What is to be done?

[Al-Turabi] A search for a formula—a formula preserving the democratic framework and guaranteeing the Armed Forces their needs. In fact the past few days have witnessed a good flow of military supplies to the Armed Forces.

[Mahjub] Some observers say that Sudanese officials' interests lie with their own positions and parties, that there have been several Sudanese governments in a short period of time, that the situation is Sudan is deteriorating, and in particular that Sudanese citizens have had no positive experiences apart from democracy and freedom.

[Al-Turabi] Of course, the Sudanese have always expressed their attachment to democracy and freedom. And of course there is a price to be paid for every system. If you want to give priority to security requirements and certain living conditions, you must forego some freedom. And if you need freedom you must forego some of your other requirements. Every country has its equilibrium and the country's people are supposed to determine their own future in such a way that will preserve that equilibrium according to their assessment of the relative importance of their needs: freedom or stability, for instance.

[Mahjub] What about Sudan's future?

[Al-Turabi] It is difficult to predict what will happen now. But if we consider Sudan's contemporary history, we will find that all the military regimes were eventually followed by a move toward democracy. This is because Sudan is variable and can only be contained by discipline, mutual agreement, and freedom. Throughout its political history Sudan has sought that equilibrium, but actual conditions tend to move it sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left! [Mahjub] What is your comment on President Husni Mubarak's recent statements?

[Al-Turabi] If those statements prove to be true, it will mean at least a cancellation of the brotherhood session scheduled for 4 March and will probably mean the cancellation of the brotherhood plan as a whole. The Sudanese Government is now examining these statements and their political effect on brotherhood relations. Regardless of the future of the program governing relations, that is, the brotherhood charter, relations will continue on a bilateral level and will not be severed; they will be normal. The brotherhood charter will be reconsidered in the light of the statements made.

[Mahjub] It is being reported that party militias are on alert. Against the Army!

[Al-Turabi] These are unfounded, false assertions. It is unlikely that an armed conflict or a civil war in the north will take a place in a country already suffering a civil war in the south.

Second, the parties do not have armed militias, as some people think. True, at some point during the opposition to the former regime, certain elements were trained in the use of arms, but these elements were limited in number. Some of them are now working and some have emigrated. According to my information, none has any organized groups.

[Mahjub] Have any contacts been made with the states that supplied Sudan with arms after the military's memorandum?

[Al-Turabi] No. There are regular contacts, but their occurrence at that particular time was a mere coincidence.

[Mahjub] Observers say Sudan is witnessing at this stage of democracy a situation worse than any under former regimes in terms of chaos, economic crises, divisions, and the rebels' success in capturing new towns.

[Al-Turabi] Indeed never before in Sudan's history have the rebels succeeded in occupying the entire area along the border with Ethiopia, because never before have the rebels received so much international backing. True, the economic situation in general is deteriorating as a result of political unrest and some natural emergencies. It probably represents the worst picture in Sudan's contemporary history. The concern now is not about losing Sudan but, rather, about the regime's stability and its ability to surmount the crisis. However, the country's unity will not be exposed to any particular challenge, because the rebellion in the south does not primarily mean separation. So the unity of Sudanese life is preserved, God willing.

[Mahjub] Do you believe the political unrest at this particular time has caused that crisis?

[Al-Turabi] Of course. The complexity of Sudan's social and regional fabric and its freedom have led to political unrest in the search for democratic frameworks to guarantee stability. As I said earlier, these developments reflect the Sudanese people's search for a formula of stability and freedom.

[Mahjub] Is there any defect within the Sudanese regime that has caused this situation?

[Al-Turabi] Obviously the regime in Sudan is a free, democratic regime in a complex environment, which is why it is exposed to such crises. Anyhow, all Sudan's contemporary constitutional experiments represent a search for a formula to guarantee freedom. Such formulas often emerge incomplete. They tend to collapse, then rise up again, and so on. In this way we will achieve stability, God willing.

Armed Forces Spokesman: 'No Pledges' Given

EA0703163789 Khartoum National Unity Radio in Arabic 1245 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] The official spokesman of the Armed Forces has said in an official statement that the command of the Armed Forces has not taken any new measures following the General Command's statement of 28 February 1989, which stressed that it will not delegate powers to any quarter whatsoever. The command stressed its commitment to constitutional legitimacy and its determination to have implemented what was contained in its memorandum of 20 February 1989.

The official Armed Forces spokesman said the General Command gave no pledges to any quarter on any subject tabled for discussion. The Armed Forces at no time stated they were taking a course opposed to constitutional legitimacy in tackling issues.

Signed: Brigadier Muhammad 'Uthman Muhammad Malik, the official spokesman of the Armed Forces.

Rebels Claim Capture of Over 200 Army Soldiers

EA0703200989 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Radio SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] correspondent accompanying "Bright Star" forces yesterday, 6th March 1989, reported that in Torit the SPLA had taken prisoner 10 Army officers, including one full colonel, two lieutenant-colonels, one major medical doctor, one captain and five first lieutenants, plus the commissioner of the province and commander of prisons forces, and more than 200 from other Army ranks, and not 20 as announced yesterday.

We therefore apologize to our listeners for that error. Once again the number of Army soldiers taken prisoner were more than 200 and not 20, as announced yesterday. Our correspondent said that more are still being rounded up in the villages and their details will be sent to Radio SPLA soon.

Dropped Supplies Captured

EA0703204489 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] forces have captured six parachutes with their loads dropped by the enemy, which fell 200 meters outside Langbar enemy garrison on 3rd March 1989. According to a spokesman for SPLM-SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Movement], the enemy is advised that they cannot possibly maintain such a huge force in [word indistinct] through parachuting. It did not work in Nasir, Torit, and many other places and the solution is to leave and to do so quickly.

Foreign Ministry Reviews Relations With Kenya

EA0703162589 Khartoum National Unity Radio in Arabic 1245 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] A study of the development of relations with Kenya has begun at the Foreign Ministry. The aftermath of the expulsion of two diplomats from the Sudanese Embassy in Kenya and the similar step taken by the Sudanese Government is being discussed.

The acting foreign minister, Dr Hasan Abdullah al-Turabi, heard a report from the Sudanese charge d'affaires in Kenya. The participants in the meeting discussed the developments which led to the expulsion of the Sudanese diplomats, Mr Ali Yusuf, the charge d'affaires, and Hasan Bashir Nasr, the embassy counselor.

Investigations indicate that the real reason for the situation is that Kenya felt that Sudan was experiencing a political crisis as a result of international moves in support of the rebel movement. Its evaluation was that the regime was about to collapse. Therefore, it considered this an opportune moment to settle its account with Sudan.

SUNA: Further Denunciation of 'Satanic Verses'

EA0703172689 Khartoum SUNA in English 1030 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Khartoum, 7 Mar (SUNA)—A group of Sudanese Moslem thinkers have described the book of "Satanic Verses", written by Salman Rushdie as heretical deserved execution [as received]. The Sudanese thinkers, in a press release made public here today, warned houses of publication and distribution from hurting the beliefs of Moslems. They urged the British Government to stop publishing and printing books insulting Islam and Moslems' beliefs.

Tunisia

Ben Ali Submits Candidacy for President 7 Mar

LD0803102789 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Excerpt] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali presented his candidacy for the presidential elections to the commission in charge of accepting candidacies at the headquarters of the Chamber of Deputies this afternoon. [passage omitted]

Egypt's 'Abd al-Majid Stops Over for Talks

LD0803112889 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, made a stopover in Tunis yesterday en route from Algeria to Egypt.

Foreign Minister Abdelhamid Escheikh, and 'Ali Mahir, Egyptian ambassador to Tunisia, attended the welcome ceremony. The two ministers discussed bilateral relations and cooperation between Egypt and Tunisia. Consultations on coordinating Tunisian and Egyptian diplomacy with regard to developments in the Middle East, common efforts to support Palestinian rights and the achievement of a just peace in the region were discussed during the meeting.

Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid emphasized the solidity of relations between Tunisia and Egypt. He mentioned the visit which Dr 'Atif Sidqi, Egyptian prime minister, will pay to Tunisia to participate in the meetings of the Tunisian-Egyptian higher committee which is to be held in the next few weeks in Tunis and which will enable the development of bilateral cooperation and strengthen it.

Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid blessed the establishment of Arab groupings affirming that every Arab grouping can strengthen the Arab position and give them more force and solidity in the service of our common pan-Arab goals.

He affirmed the eagerness of Egypt to solve the Palestinian problem in the framework of an international peace conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations. After this, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid left Tunis for Egypt.

Intra-Gulf Affairs

GCC Ministerial Council Begins 30th Session

JN0603162589 Manama WAKH in English 1530 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, March 6 (GNA)—The 30th session of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] Ministerial Council began here this morning under the chairmanship of Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah.

The meeting's agenda includes a number of issues, including developments in the Gulf region with a special emphasis on the Iran-Iraq peace negotiations, scheduled to resume in New York later this month.

The ministers will also discuss Arab issues, particularly the Palestinian question and prospects for holding an international peace conference.

The Lebanese crisis, and the current efforts of the Arab League committee of six seeking an end to the Lebanese problem would also come up in the deliberations.

Committee Chairman, Kuwaiti Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad would report to the ministers on the outcome of the contacts of the Arab League panel, which concluded its second phase in Kuwait last week.

Addressing the opening session, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak said that the GCC Ministerial Council begins a new session, one of a series aimed at GCC progress inspired by the GCC ninth summit conference which was held late last year in Bahrain.

The Bahraini foreign minister referred to the summit's declaration which, he noted, emphasized the integration of the aspirations of GCC. He also emphasized the need to achieve more accomplishments in various fields.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak said that increasing efforts towards regional cooperation are now evident in the Arab world. He referred to the establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council and the Arab Maghreb Union.

The minister also referred to the Iraq-Iran peace negotiations. He said the GCC countries were exercising their utmost efforts to support those negotiations in order to reach full implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 598 to end the bitter conflict which have drained the potentials of the two nations.

Bahrain which chairs the GCC Council has made contacts in the light of the resolutions of the ninth summit. The outcome of the contacts have been communicated to all member countries, he added.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak expressed the GCC's full support for the Palestinian people's struggle against Israeli occupation and praised the uprising in the occupied territories, expressing the hope that the Palestinian people will be able to establish their independent state on their soil.

Expressing the hope that an immediate solution could be reached to the crisis in Lebanon, the Bahrain foreign minister praised the efforts of the Kuwaiti foreign minister in that regard in his capacity as the chairman of the Arab League committee seeking a solution to the Lebanese crisis.

The GCC Ministerial Council held a closed session to discuss its agenda which the Bahraini minister said included many items geared towards achieving welfare and prosperity for the peoples of the region.

Lebanon Crisis Discussed

JN0603162989 Manama WAKH in English 1604 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, March 6 (GNA)—GCC foreign ministers adjourned their first working session which began here earlier today under the chairmabnship of Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah.

GULF NEWS AGENCY learned that the ministers discussed political issues on the agenda and adopted important resolutions towards them.

Reliable sources said that the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Oman will discuss economic issues later today. The ministers will hold their final session tomorrow morning to issue the final statement, according the same sources.

Following the session, the Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah said that the meeting discussed political issues on the agenda mainly the Iraq-Iran peace talks and current Arab situation in general.

He added that the Kuwaiti Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad who is chairing the Arab League six-man committee assigned to solve the Lebanese crisis briefed the council on the outcome of the committee's efforts to find a solution to that crisis.

Economic Cooperation Reviewed

JN0603200289 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1830 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 6 Mar (WAKH)—The Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] Ministerial Council held a second session in Riyadh this evening under the chairmanship of Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah.

At this meeting, GCC foreign ministers will discuss the report of the general secretariat on the achievements that were scored during the specialized ministerial committees' meetings in all spheres of cooperation among the GCC countries, particularly in the economic and trade fields, and the recommendations submitted by the ministerial committees in this respect. They will also review resolutions that were adopted by the ninth summit held in Bahrain last December and subsequently implemented.

The Ministerial Council is expected to end its meetings tomorrow morning. The chairman of the current session will then hold a news conference in which he will speak about the most important points that were discussed.

Second Session Concluded

JN0603205089 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1909 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 6 Mar (WAKH) — The Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] Ministerial Council concluded its second session here this evening.

Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah, chairman of the session, stated that the council finished discussing all political and economic topics on its agenda.

He said that the council will hold its closing session tomorrow, Tuesday, in which it will issue a statement on the results of this session's meetings. The 30th session of the Ministerial Council began its work this morning.

King Fahd Receives Ministers

LD0603175989 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1345 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 6 Mar (SPA)—King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, received the GCC foreign ministers in his office this afternoon. The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal; Mr 'Abdallah Bisharah, GCC secretary general; and the GCC ambassadors to Saudi Arabia.

Press Communique Issued

LD0703140489 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1047 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Riyadh, 7 Mar (SPA)—This afternoon the GCC foreign ministers concluded their 30th session under the chairmanship of Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah, at the GCC General Secretariat. His Excellency 'Abdallah Ya'qub Bisharah, GCC general secretary, read the press communique of the 30th ministerial council session at the final meeting. The text follows:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The ministerial council held its 30th session at the General Secretariat headquarters in Riyadh between 5 and 7 March 1989, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah, foreign minister of the state of Bahrain and chairman of the Ministerial Council's current session. All members were in attendance.

His Excellency Rashid ibn 'Abdallah al-Nu'aymi, UAE minister of state for foreign affairs

His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia foreign minister

His Excellency Yusuf ibn 'Alawi ibn 'Abdallah, Sultanate of Oman minister of foreign affairs

His Excellency Shaykh Ahmad ibn Sayf al-Thani, State of Qatar minister of foreign affairs

His Excellency Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, Kuwait deputy prime minister and foreign minister

The council reviewed the pace and state of the implementation of the supreme council's resolutions adopted at its ninth session which was held in Bahrain.

The council also reviewed regional, Arab, and international developments and listened to a report from the chairman of the current session, His Excellency Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah, minister of foreign affairs of the State of Bahrain, regarding the contacts made by the chairman on behalf of the council in light of the council's stands concerning the stages of negotiations and the contacts made to carry out UN Security Council Resolution No 598.

Out of adherence to the policy laid down by their majesties and highnesses, the council affirmed its support for the efforts of the UN secretary general and for his endeavors to achieve a lasting and comprehensive peace that will ensure stability in the region. It also affirmed the continuity of the council's policy in maintaining contacts with the parties concerned and with the permanent member states of the Security Council in order to achieve progress in the current negotiations between Iraq and Iran.

In this respect, the council expresses its satisfaction with the agreement by both countries to form a joint military committee and to exchange ill and disabled prisoners of war.

The council expressed its conviction in the vital role these measures have in improving the atmosphere of the negotiations and in building trust between the two parties.

Following up on the decision of the ninth summit held in Bahrain on the current Arab situation, and particularly the situation in Lebanon, stemming from the council's keen interest in maintaining the independence of Lebanon, its territorial integrity and national unity, and emphasizing its legitimacy, the council expresses its support for and appreciation of the efforts being made by

the six-member ministerial committee set up by the Arab League, and of its chairman, His Excellency Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, toward achieving its aims in solving the Lebanon crisis. The council appeals to all parties to respond to the committee's efforts to achieve the aspired settlement which will save Lebanon from its predicament.

The council also reviewed the latest developments in the occupied land and the continuing intifadah [uprising] against the oppressive occupation and practices pursued by the Zionist enemy. The council hails the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories and again stresses the GCC states' support for this intifadah until it achieves its goals.

Recalling the principles stipulated in the Arab League Charter on consolidating regional cooperation among the member states, and the principles stipulated in the constitution of the GCC states to achieve firmer rapprochment and stronger ties, and in accordance with the firm foundations of the GCC with regard to action to support Arab solidarity, the council welcomes the creation of the ACC [Arab Cooperation Council] and the AMU [Arab Maghreb Union]; the council expresses its confidence in their roles to contribute to bolstering joint Arab action.

The council reaffirms the Manama declaration which emphasizes the equilibrium of the march, the comprehensive natures of the goals, the need for action by the council in accordance with the principles mentioned in the constitution. In this connection, the council reviewed the reports submitted by the general secretary on the state of joint action in various fields. It expressed its satisfaction with the steps achieved by the march of cooperation.

Issued in Riyadh on 7 March 1989.

Bahrain

Foreign Minister Comments on GCC Session

JN0703213089 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1800 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Manama, 7 Mar (WAKH)—Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah returned to Manama from Riyadh this evening after chairing the 30th session of the Ministerial Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] which concluded its work in Riyadh at noon today.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah said that in its 30th session the Ministerial Council discussed the topics and issues already discussed by the specialized committees in economic, social, and cultural areas. He added that agreements containing new steps in these spheres have been approved and will contribute to strengthening the ties and common interests among GCC citizens. He said that the approval of these steps is pursuant to the resolutions issued by the GCC Supreme Council which emphasize the comprehensiveness of the objectives of joint action.

In a statement to WAKH, the Bahraini foreign minister said that the outcome of the talks held with the world's economic blocs has been discussed. He added that the Riyadh conferees reviewed regional, Arab, and international developments.

In this regard, the minister asserted that the GCC will continue to pursue its policy of contacts to contribute to the realization of progress in the ongoing Iraq-Iran negotiations.

The minister said that the current situation in the occupied Arab territories and the continuation of the popular uprising being staged against the Israeli occupation were discussed. He added that the GCC reiterated its support and backing for this uprising until its desired objectives are achieved. He also indicated that the conferees conducted a comprehensive review of the political developments concerning GCC member states.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah also spoke about the contacts maintained by Bahrain in its capacity as the current GCC chairman with both Iraq and Iran and referred to the visit made to Baghdad by His Highness Shaykh Khalifah ibn Salman Al Khalifah, Bahraini prime minister. He said that during his visit his highness the prime minister discussed what was agreed upon at the GCC summit and regional developments with Iraqi officials.

The minister also referred to visits by Iraqi officials to Bahrain and also to the visit which will the Iranian president's envoy will make to Bahrain during the coming 2 days.

Shaykh Muhammad also said that during his recent meeting with the Iranian foreign minister in Paris he discussed the regional situation as well as developments in the Iraq-Iran negotiations. He affirmed that the policy pursued by the GCC is based on maintaining the best of ties with Iran. He added that the the GCC member states always seek to establish such ties. He went on to say: The pace of the steps that we take toward the other side [Iran] is similar to the pace being displayed by that side. He voiced the hope that bilateral relations will further improve this year.

On the presence of the multinational troops in the Arabian Gulf waters, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah said: At present, we are currently witnessing the withdrawal and reduction of these troops day after day. He affirmed that the prevalence of peaceful atmospheres will contribute to the reduction of these troops.

The minister stressed that the GCC member states want to see the Gulf region become a region of peace devoid of any international conflicts and to see the states' territorial waters open to all parties.

Regarding the new Arab blocs, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak said: We, as an Arab nation, have been dealing with each other in the past and at present and will continue to deal with each other in the future on fraternal bilateral and collective bases. He welcomed the establishment of these blocs and indicated that the GCC member states are ready to deal with them in various spheres.

The Bahraini foreign minister urged these blocs to be a source of strength to the Arab League. He added that the GCC member states are part of the Arab League and went on to say that the Arab League is the first spokesman on everything that concerns the Arab nation in general.

On the Lebanese question, he said that the GCC member states support the efforts by the six-member Arab committee entrusted with finding a solution to the Lebanese political crisis. He added: The favorable response which has surfaced so far since the commencement of the committee's work stresses the urgent need to realize the aspirations of both the Lebanese people and the entire Arab nation, to elect a president, form a new government, terminate the armed situation in Lebanon, and help Lebanon to achieve its independence.

The minister said: We appeal to all parties inside and outside Lebanon to support and back the committee to help its efforts succeed.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak affirmed that the GCC member states have devoted all of their political capabilities and and placed all their weight in the world and on all levels for the sake of Lebanon.

On the Palestine question, Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak affirmed the GCC member states' backing and support for the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO to help realize their security, stability, and the independence of their soil.

The Bahraini foreign minister expressed the belief that the United States will have a positive and effective role in the [Arab]-Israeli dispute. He affirmed the GCC member states' support for the dialogue being maintained between the PLO on the one hand and the United States and other nations on the other.

'Arafat Arrives in Manama for Talks 7 Mar

JN0703170589 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1456 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Manama, 7 Mar (WAKH)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Manama from Doha this afternoon as part of a tour of a number of the region's states.

'Arafat will hold talks with senior Bahraini officials on the current developments in the Palestinian arena, particularly those related to the situation in the occupied Arab territories in light of the valiant Palestinian uprising, and the oppressive practices being perpetrated by the occupation authorities against the sons of the Palestinian people.

The talks will also tackle the efforts being made to bring about peace in the region through convening an international peace conference and also through the Palestinian diplomatic moves being effected on all levels, and current Arab issues.

'Arafat was welcomed at the airport by Housing Minister Shaykh Khalid ibn 'Abdallah Al Khalifah and Palestinian ambassador to Bahrain Wafa Nabhan.

Holds Talks With Amir

JN0703210789 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1815 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Manama, 7 Mar (WAKH)—This evening His Highness Shaykh 'Isa ibn Salman Al Khalifah, amir of the State of Bahrain, received Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, and the delegation accompanying him during their visit to Bahrain.

The Palestinian leader briefed the Bahraini amir on the latest developments in the Palestinian arena in light of the situation in the occupied Arab territories and the valiant uprising being staged there by the Palestinian people against the Israeli occupation troops.

'Arafat also briefed his highness the amir on the outcome of his visits to a number of Arab and European states. These visits were made within the framework of Palestinian diplomatic moves effected in the wake of recent PLO resolutions adopted with the aim of resolving the Palestine question and establishing the Palestinian state and also within the framework of the endeavors being made to convene an international Middle East peace conference.

His highness the amir and 'Arafat also reviewed the latest developments in the Arab and international arenas as well as the issues that are of concern to the Arab world.

His highness the Bahraini amir paid tribute to the Palestinian people's steadfastness and to their blessed uprising against the Zionist occupation. He also reiterated Bahrain's stands in support of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and 'Arafat's efforts to gain international support for the Palestine question. The amir also affirmed to 'Arafat Bahrain's support for the PLO's moves on all levels and at all international fora.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah, Housing Minister Shaykh Khalid ibn 'Abdallah Al Khalifah, Palestinian Ambassador to Bahrain Wafa Nabhan, and 'Abd al-Rahman al-Suwayr, a Palestinian embassy official.

Leaves for Pakistan 8 Mar

JN0803072189 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0600 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Manama, 8 Mar (WAKH)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and the delegation accompanying him left Manama today for Pakistan following a 1-day visit to Bahrain within the framework of a tour of a number of the region's states. [passage omitted]

New Zealand Minister, Delegation Depart 4 Mar

JN0403063389 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0600 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Manama, 4 Mar (WAKH)—New Zealand Foreign Minister Russell Marshall and the accompanying delegation left Manama for Singapore this morning at the end of a 3-day visit to Bahrain. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Mine Found in Territorial Waters, Detonated

LD0803120989 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1131 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Kuwait, 8 Mar (KUNA)—An authoritative source at the Defense Ministry stated that a floating mine was found this morning in our territorial waters, and that the appropriate authorities retrieved the mine and detonated it.

Oman

Foreign Minister Departs for Riyadh GCC Meeting

JN0503142389 Muscat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Excerpt] His Excellency Yusuf ibn 'Alawi ibn 'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, and the accompanying delegation left the country for Saudi Arabia this afternoon to lead the Sultanate's delegation to the meetings of the 30th session of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] Ministerial Council which will begin its 2-day work there this evening. [passage omitted]

Iran's Jannati Arrives With Khamene'i Message

JN0703171089 Manama WAKH in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Muscat, March 7 (GNA)—Head of the Iranian Islamic Propaganda Organisation Ayatollah Haji Ahmad Jannati and his accompanying delegation arrived in Muscat this morning for an official visit to the Sultanate. Radio Muscat said the Iranian official is carrying a message from President 'Ali Khamene'i to Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id of Oman.

Sultan Qabus Receives Message

JN0703210089 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1900 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Salalah, 7 Mar (WAKH)—His Majesty Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id of Oman has received a written message from Iranian President 'Ali Khamene'i. The message was conveyed by Ayatollah Haji Ahmed Jannati, head of the Iranian Islamic Propaganda Organization. The meeting was attended by Sultani Court Chief Yusuf ibn Hamad Sa'ud and the Iranian ambassador accredited to the Sultanate of Oman.

Discusses Rushdie Novel

LD0803101989 Tehran IRNA in English 0850 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—Sultan Qabus of Oman said the world of Islam should take a unified stand towards 'The Satanic Verses', adding that the publication of the slanderous novel indicated that a conspiracy against Islam and Muslims was under way.

Sultan Qabus made the remark in a meeting with head of Iran's Islamic Propagation Organisation Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati in Salalah, Oman Tuesday [7 March].

During the meeting, Jannati submitted a message of President 'Ali Khamene'i calling for firm reaction of leaders of Islamic states against the new ploy of enemies of Islam led by U.S. and Britain.

Ayatollah Jannati, a member of the Council of Guardians is presently on a regional tour as president's special envoy. He visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) before arriving in Oman.

Iranian Envoy Conveys Velayati Message on ICO

JN0503110489 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1030 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Muscat, 5 Mar (WAKH)—Yusuf ibn 'Alawi ibn 'Abdallah, Omani minister of state for foreign affairs, received a message from Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati on the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] meeting to be held in Riyadh from 12 to 16 March.

Mohammad 'Arab, the Iranian ambassador accredited to the Sultanate of Oman, conveyed the message during a reception accorded to him by Yusuf ibn 'Alawi today.

UN Informed of President's Proposal on POW's

JN0803093589 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0840 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] United Nations, 8 Mar (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has informed the United Nations of Iraq's immediate readiness to accept a full and comprehensive exchange of prisoners of war [POW's] regardless of the outcome of the Iraqi-Iranian negotiations.

In a message to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar yesterday, Tariq 'Aziz conveyed the proposal President Saddam Husayn made on 5 March regarding the need for the two countries to pledge in an agreement to be guaranteed by the United Nations that these POW's will not be used, upon their repatriation, as a weight in the two countries' armies.

This will help the two sides in the negotiating process regardless of the outcome of the negotiations or progress on the road of a lasting and comprehensive peace in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution No 598 and the 8 August 1988 agreement until a comprehensive and durable peace between Iraq and Iran is established.

Cabinet Discusses 'Restrictions' on Freedom

JN0703160189 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1425 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Mar (INA)—President Saddam Husayn chaired a cabinet meeting this morning that lasted for more than 5 hours. The meeting covered topics on the agenda and adopted the necessary measures and resolutions.

The cabinet discussed restrictions on citizens' freedom that were necessitated by the war and the security of the homeland. It recommended that the Revolution Command Council consider annulling some restrictions for which there is no longer a need.

The cabinet also discussed promoting the country's poultry production, especially measures to secure the needs of poultry farms in fodder, equipment, and other requirements.

President Saddam Husayn gave orders in mid-1988, before the cease-fire, that ministries reconsider regulations and instructions that restricted the freedom of citizens, and which were made under wartime conditions.

It was decided at the meeting to give ministries 2 weeks to provide lists of the measures they had taken to implement the president's order. A committee from the presidential office will follow up with the ministries.

This measure is in harmony with the policy of the party and the revolution to deepen the democratic process and to lift restrictions dictated by extraordinary wartime circumstances. The measure is also designed to enrich the revolution's democratic progress and build and develop a prosperous society.

Agriculture Minister Dismissed for 'Failure'

JN0703183589 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1755 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Mar (INA)—A presidential decree issued here this evening relieved Agriculture and Irrigation Minister Karim Hasan Rida of his post over his complete failure in managing his ministry despite the chances he was given.

The decree states that the minister failed to manage the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation despite the chances he was given.

The cabinet met under President Saddam Husayn during and discussed several subjects, including promoting Iraq's poultry production, especially measures to secure the needs of poultry farms of fodder, equipment, and other requirements.

Technicians Begin To Clear Shatt al-'Arab

JN0603203789 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1755 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 6 Mar (INA)—It was announced here today that Iraqi technicians have begun a wide campaign to clear Shatt al-'Arab.

Transport and Communications Minister Muhammad Hamzah told INA today that the campaign aims to pick up ships, debris [al-jana'ib], and equipment submerged in the Shatt al-'Arab waters. He added that the technical teams managed to pick up three 200-ton ships and other submerged objects. The teams are currently working to pick up a large 10,000-ton ship.

Concerning the nature of the technical teams' work, the minister explained that three teams were formed: The first team is entrusted with exploration; the second with picking up; and the third with digging to cut and float the submerged objects and move them out of Shatt al-'Arab waters.

He pointed out that the 10 naval units, which were held in the Saudi port of Jizan during the war, are being used in the campaign. [passage omitted]

Weizman Plans Meeting With USSR's Dubinin

TA0703175289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Science and Development Minister 'Ezer Weizman has been invited to meet Yuriy Dubinin, Soviet ambassador to Washington, in the embassy building tomorrow. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that Minister Weizman will apparently be invited by the Soviet Academy of Sciences to visit Moscow. Arye Shumer, director general of Weizman's ministry, confirmed the report about tomorrow's meeting but refused to react to the possibility of an invitation to the Soviet Union.

Shamir Orders Meeting Canceled

TA0703201689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir this evening ordered Minister 'Ezer Weizman to cancel his planned meeting tomorrow with Yuriy Dubinin, Soviet ambassador to Washington. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that the prime minister held a telephone conversation with Minister Weizman, who is in New York. The prime minister ordered him to cancel the meeting initiated by Ambassador Dubinin, arguing that the foreign minister is the one who should maintain contacts with foreign countries.

Weizman Cancels Meeting

TA0803052889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Last night the prime minister instructed Minister Weizman to cancel his meeting with the Soviet ambassador in Washington. Our correspondent Shim'on Schiffer has learned from a source that dealt with organizing the meeting that Mr Shamir informed Minister Weizman that if he went to the meeting he would come out a private citizen, not a member of the cabinet. The prime minister explained that it is the foreign minister who is in charge of maintaining contacts with foreign countries. Minister Weizman complied with Mr Shamir's request to cancel the meeting, but denied that Mr Shamir had threatened him. Our correspondent nevertheless maintains that the organizer of the meeting cited this background as the reason for the cancellation.

Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres expressed surprise at Shamir's instruction.

Over the past few months, several meetings had been arranged between 'Ezer Weizman and Soviet personalities. A meeting with the Soviets was once canceled because the Soviets wanted it to be held on a Saturday. Minister Weizman was hoping to obtain an invitation to Moscow through those meetings.

Arens Attacks Shevardnadze's 'Blunt Phrases'

TA0803132289 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 8 Mar 89 pp A1, 2

[Report by Ilan Bakhar]

[Excerpt] On the eve of his departure for the United States, Foreign Minister Moshe Arens came out with a harsh attack on the Soviet position against Israel. "Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze introduced some very blunt phrases into his speech in Cairo. They are reminiscent of the kind of statements emanating from Moscow during Brezhnev's time, or even during the Bulganin era."

Arens especially stressed Shevardnadze's statement about possible sanctions against Israel and his doubts as to whether Israel is interested in peace at all. Arens disclosed that the Soviet minister told him in Cairo that Moscow wants to renew diplomatic relations with Israel, but only under circumstances that would not anger the Arab world.

As for the Labor Party's intention of launching a political offensive should Shamir's U.S. visit not yield positive results, Arens said: "I presume that the general mood in the Labor Party is not the best right now. Perhaps some Labor Party members are contemplating acts of despair to improve their feeling and the party's standing. Should the Labor Party present independent positions while still belonging to the Cabinet, I cannot conceive of such a government functioning." [passage omitted]

[In another interview with Foreign Minister Arens on page A6 of the same newspaper, Ilan Bakhar reports that when asked whether Syria presents any immediate danger, Arens replied: "Syria has a border with Israel. It has a very large Army and is ruled by a dictator, where the decision of one single person to launch a war would be sufficient. Syria has never shirked violence and does not attribute the same values to human life as we do. It is merely a matter of Syrian calculation or miscalculation that would bring us to the brink of war."]

IDF, UNIFIL Conflict in Southern Lebanon

TA0703174689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] This afternoon there was a serious incident in southern Lebanon between an IDF contingent and soldiers from the Norwegian contingent of UNIFIL. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that the commander of the Norwegian battalion ordered an IDF convoy traveling in the eastern sector to halt. The Norwegian soldiers offered opposition to an IDF officer who tried to convince them to open the road. In reaction, the IDF soldiers broke through the roadblock. The UNIFIL spokesman told our correspondent that an IDF tank rammed several UNIFIL vehicles, causing them serious damage. The IDF closed all roads in southern

Lebanon this afternoon; many UN people, among them civilians living in Israel, remained in the UN camps and could not reach their homes.

The commander of the IDF Northern Command told the UNIFIL commander that he regards the incident with extreme gravity and emphasized that the IDF will continue to move freely on all roads in southern Lebanon.

Rabin Criticizes UNIFIL

TA0803145589 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1430 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said Israel would not permit the UN force in southern Lebanon to hinder the Israel army's freedom of movement there. His remarks were made in reaction to yesterday's serious incident between Israeli soldiers and the UN Interim Forces in Lebanon [UNIFIL] in southern Lebanon's central sector. Rabin also said that Israel would not permit UNIFIL to change its deployment in southern Lebanon.

Rabin told our correspondent in the north Menahem Horowitz that Syria is continuing its efforts to build up its military might in accordance with its aspiration to achieve strategic parity with Israel.

Shamir Denies Rumors of Talks With PLO

TA0703162389 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir today said that all the rumors to the effect that we are holding contacts with the PLO are groundless. Shamir reiterated that we will not hold peace talks with the PLO. Our correspondent Shlomi Stein reports:

[Begin recording] [Stein] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir today said that the United States is the only country we trust to conduct peace negotiations. We are aware of the U.S. position on the international conference, and in light of favorable past experience, we trust the Americans.

[Shamir] The United States is actually the only country in the world that we trust on cooperation in these areas, although we should not overlook the differences of opinion that have always existed and will continue to do so. We will try as far as possible, however, to work together and to cooperate with the U.S. Government in this sphere, just as in all the other spheres.

[Stein] Regarding reports that the PLO has offered a cease-fire on the northern border in exchange for the IDF halting the use of firearms in the territories, the prime minister said that we will not hold peace talks with the PLO. Shamir said there will be no peace agreement in our region, which includes contacts between us and the PLO. When asked to react to Inner Cabinet member Minister Moshe Shahal's proposal calling for a unilateral withdrawal from Gaza, the prime minister answered in one word:

[Shamir] Blabber. [end recording] [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1600 GMT on 7 March adds that "Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir does not attach any particular importance to the reports that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker objects to the notion of an international conference. Speaking at a news conference in Jerusalem, Mr Shamir said this was not surprising because Washington has for years had reservations about such a notion." "Commenting on the death of the security prisoner in Gaza, the prime minister said he was not expecting new affairs, but noted that there is and would be an investigation."]

SHAS Has 'No Plans' To Meet With PLO

TA0803084889 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 8 Mar 89 p 12

[Report by Hayim Shapira]

[Text] The SHAS [Torah Observing Sepharadim] Council of Torah Sages has no plans to discuss a possible meeting between SHAS leaders and representatives of the PLO, SHAS spokesman Tzvi Jacobson told THE JERUSALEM POST yesterday.

Jacobson was reacting to a report in HADASHOT to the effect that last week Israelis and French Jews of North African origin who support negotiations with the PLO met secretly with MK [Knesset Member] Ya'ir Levi of SHAS to invite the SHAS MKs to a planned conference with PLO representatives in Paris. The PLO has indicated an interest in meeting with MKs of Middle Eastern origin, the report said.

The report has resulted in considerable embarrassment for SHAS, whose Knesset members and spiritual leaders are thought to have a somewhat dovish stand regarding negotiations with Palestinians, while the bulk of the party supporters are viewed as hawkish in their views.

Jacobson affirmed that the meeting had taken place and that Levi had made it clear that any decision on SHAS attendance at such a gathering would have to come from the party's Council of Torah Sages, which is headed by former Sephardi chief rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef.

But Jacobson also indicated that there are no plans to convene the Council in the near future and that the sages have no intention of even considering a meeting between SHAS MKs and PLO representatives.

Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef is presently in the U.S., where he is being hosted by its Sephardi community.

[Tel Aviv THE NATION in English on 8 March 89 in an unattributed report on page 3 adds that SHAS MK Ya'ir Levi "yesterday denied a HADASHOT article stating that several SHAS MK's were seeking to arrange a meeting with the PLO. The Knesset Office spokesman

Yisra'el Haddad said the report was an attempt to 'besmirch' the party's reputation. 'Lies, all lies! There are absolutely no advocates of talking to the PLO.'"]

Settlers Proceed to Unauthorized Settlements

TA0803055689 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] A group of Jewish settlers arrived last night at the sight of 'Ofarim, south of Bet Arye near Ramallah. The settlement nucleus is not connected with the Gush Emunim Movement. The site is one of the eight earmarked for new Jewish settlement in the territories in the coalition agreement, but the government has not yet given permission for settlement at 'Ofarim.

The Army has allowed three caravans earmarked for the new settlement of Talmon to reach Bet Horon in the Binyamin area. The caravans began their journey last night from Tel Aviv, where they were given a send-off by tens of thousands of Gush Emunim supporters, demonstrating in support of increased Jewish settlement in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. Uri Ari'el, the secretary of the Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza Settlers Council, says no attempt will be made to reach Talmon, near Ramallah, until the government gives final approval for the settlement.

Settlers Evacuated From Site

TA0803073289 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] The site of the settlement of 'Ofarim near Ramallah was declared a closed military zone. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that large army units are located at the area and that it is free of settlers.

Sources in the defense minister's office told our correspondent Karmela Menashe that a nucleus of settlers arrived at a hill near the site designated for the settlement last night, but were evacuated a few minutes later.

Shamir: No New Settlements in 'Near Future'

TA0803131589 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 8 Mar 89 p 1

[Report by Sha'ul Schiff]

[Excerpt] Uri Ari'el, the chairman of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, said yesterday that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir informed him that he has no intention of approving new settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza in the near future.

It seems that the prime minister wishes to create a propitious atmosphere before his departure for Washington, and to avoid a conflict with the U.S. Administration against the backdrop of the establishment of new settlements.

As far as is known, the Egyptians have also made it clear that they would take a grave view of the establishment of new settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. [passage omitted]

IMF, Likud Ministers Criticize Economic Policies

TA0603104489 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 6 Mar 89 pp 1, 10

[Report by Avi Temkin and Asher Wallfish]

[Excerpts] Finance Minister Shim'on Peres came under fire yesterday from both his cabinet colleagues and the International Monetary Fund.

In the cabinet, Peres was heavily criticized for his readiness to raise marginal income tax rates, while the IMF also criticised his readiness to bail out inefficient sectors and enterprises and to help Koor [Histadrut holding company] and the kibbutzim.

The IMF preliminary report on the Israeli economy sharply criticized all those involved in drafting and managing of economic policy in the last months, the Treasury, the Bank of Israel, the Histadrut and the trade unions. The delegation which drafted the report left Israel yesterday after a two week visit.

The report warns against increasing the budget deficit to help the kibbutzim and Koor. It blames the Bank of Israel for the loss of foreign currency reserves and the Histadrut for demanding economically harmful concessions as the price of cooperating with the government's economic policy.

In the cabinet, all the Likud ministers save one ganged up against Peres in a vain bid to reverse his agreements with the Histadrut. [passage omitted]

The IMF report sternly warns Peres against bailing out enterprises and sectors which are not economically viable. The fund economists said that the payments linked with the financial restructuring of Koor and the kibbutzim represents a threat to the budget and to the government's credibility. It praises the Treasury's success in restraining military spending and cutting subsidies, but it says that the pressure to do better should be unrelenting. "Financial accommodation for troubled enterprises should be restricted to a very few special cases," the report stated.

The report also attacked the concessions exacted by the Histadrut in return for a new cost of living allowance accord, although it warmly praised the government for its success in reducing the linkage between wages and prices.

The report expressed "regret" at the fact that the Treasury was forced to raise the maximum income tax rate. It says that pension funds have to be persuaded to participate in the capital market reform and warns that the

Minimum Wage Law could cause a return of inflationary pressures. All these were included in the accord between Peres and [Histadrut Secretary General Yisra'el] Qeysar last month.

The report also said that the payments associated with the accord between Peres and Qeysar represent a threat to fiscal restraint. Nevertheless it approves of what is called the "constructive approach the trade unions have begun to adopt," as exemplified in the case of Koor's wage cuts.

The report also contains a powerful attack on the Bank of Israel monetary policy during recent months. The fund economists agreed with the Bank that the policy of fixed exchange rates should continue, as an anchor to prices. But they charged that monetary policy was responsible for the loss of foreign exchange reserves in 1988.

"The supply of domestic liquidity was ample enough last year to lead to a progressive loss of net foreign assets by the banking system even before the exchange crisis broke at the end of the year. The authorities seem to have been more concerned with providing a stimulus to domestic activity, than in protecting the exchange rate," the report stated.

The IMF economists also recommend the Bank of Israel pursue a policy of monetary and credit restraint. This "will not only help to ensure price stability, but promote growth as well." This recommendation runs contrary to the policies followed by the Bank of Israel since January.

The report urges the government to liberalize and reform the banking system. It says that severe regulation of the banking system may require an undue reliance by banks on short-term financial margins, apart from the monopoly position they may also be able to exploit.

The IMF economists said that the central problem of policy should be to get investment moving again. It urges the implementation of structural reforms in the capital market, by lowering government borrowing.

Frayj: Israel Wants To Annex West Bank, Gaza

TA0803134189 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 8 Mar 89 p 2

[Report by Roni Shaqed]

[Text] "Israel has no peace plan. It wants to annex the West Bank and Gaza and wants peace with the Palestinians without giving them any rights to their land." This was stated last night by Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj in an interview with YEDI'OT AHARONOT 1 day after his meeting with Shim'on Peres.

Frayj claimed that Shamir is not prepared to engage in any negotiations on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 242, which amounts to withdrawal. "He calls them the 'liberated' territories. He will leave for the United States without any plan, just as he did when he visited France. I fear it will turn out that in the long run official Israel might adhere to Rehav'am Ze'evi's transfer idea."

Frayj said that the intifadah [uprising] will continue because the Palestinians in the territories have no guarantee that Israel will change its policy. "The entire Palestinian people participates in the intifadah, the difficult problems, mainly in their economic situations, notwithstanding. Still, no one is talking about ending it."

Frayj reported that the Governments of Italy and the FRG have provided financial support for the Bethlehem municipality to improve the city sewage system.

PRC Official Sees 'Rosy Future' in Relations

TA0103193889 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 1 Mar 89

[Excerpts] As could be expected, the detente with the PRC has been launched through tourism. A senior representative of the PRC National Tourism Administration is currently visiting Israel. He is perhaps the most senior representative of the Chinese Government to have ever arrived in Israel. Our economic affairs correspondent in Tel Aviv, Gadi Sukenik, met with the guest who was bursting with optimism with regard to the future.

[Begin recording] [Sukenik] A genuine Chinese with an official title and a message is here. Today we met him together with his hosts, the Geographical Tour Society. Guo Wenbin is the director of the European section, which includes Israel, in the China Tourism Service.

He told us that the restrictions on Israeli tourists have been lifted. He spoke about the rosy future of relations and about the high-level decision to open China to Israeli visitors—an attitude to which we were not accustomed until 1 or 2 years ago.

[Guo, in English] Last year we received about 300 tourists, and this year we plan to have 1,150. There is a lot of potential today. This is a new market for Chinese business. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Polish Deputy Agriculture Minister Pays Visit

TA2702103689 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 27 Feb 89 p 22

[Report by Navit Sommer]

[Text] Industry and Trade Minister Ari'el Sharon met yesterday with Polish Deputy Agriculture Minister Dr Malinowski. At the meeting, which took place at the request of the Polish official, the deputy minister stated the Polish Government's desire to establish trade cooperation with Israel. He noted that his visit to Israel is aimed at continuing the process launched by Minister Sharon's visit to Poland in September 1988.

The value of Israeli exports to Poland in 1988 stood at $4.4 million, while imports from Poland in the same year reached $14.1 million.

Meets With Shamir

TA0203120089 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 2 Mar 89

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir today met with Polish Deputy Agriculture Minister Andrzej Malinowski. The prime minister noted that Israel wishes to tighten and deepen the ties with Poland. The Polish deputy minister expressed the hope that an agreement on agricultural cooperation will soon be signed between the two countries.

Cooperation Agreement Signed

TA0503101489 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 5 Mar 89 p 6

[Text] A memorandum of understanding calling for agricultural cooperation between Poland and Israel was signed in Jerusalem last week by Poland's deputy agriculture minister, Andrzej Malinowski.

Signing on behalf of the Israeli government was Shmu'el Pohoryles, head of the Agriculture Ministry's planning department. The Polish minister is here on a week-long visit.

The memorandum calls for cooperation in research projects involving veterinary development, dairy production, artificial insemination and agricultural mechanization.

The Polish deputy minister and his delegation visited the Volcani Institute for agricultural research during their stay and met with Prime Minister Shamir Thursday.

Agriculture Minister Avraham Katz-'Oz said he viewed with great importance the strengthening of agricultural ties between Israel and Eastern Europe. "I hope that in the future it will open up new export markets for Israeli agricultural produce," he said.

Poland's Rakowski Comments on Bilateral Relations

TA2402114489 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 24 Feb 89 p 10

["First exclusive interview to an Israeli paper" with Mieczyslaw Rakowski, Polish Council of Ministers chairman, by Yosef Shemi in Rakowski's Warsaw office; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Shemi] When will Poland resume diplomatic relations with Israel?

[Rakowski] I cannot tell you exactly when diplomatic relations will resume. In the last 2 years, both sides have taken steps to resume economic and cultural relations. You may say that we are currently revising the principles which prevailed in the past. Personally, in my capacity as prime minister, I have not placed the issue of resuming relations on the government's agenda. The more "bricks" there are in the edifice of peace, the more progress will be made toward the resumption of relations.

[Shemi] How do you assess the severance of diplomatic relations after 20 years?

[Rakowski] There are situations that oblige certain reactions. I leave the assessment of those moves to historians. I see no connection between the severance of diplomatic relations with Israel and the centuries-long relations between Poles and Jews. These are two separate matters.

[Shemi] What is the Polish Government's position concerning the solution of the Middle East conflict?

[Rakowski] Poland's foreign policy tilts toward Western Europe. Other than in terms of economic ties, the Middle East is of interest to us insomuch as the situation there strengthens peace in the world. My personal opinion is that both parties to the conflict—and I am talking about Israel and the Palestinians—must come to a dialogue. I do not think the conflict can be settled with the help of an international conference, a round table, or pressure by the superpowers. A dialogue requires good will from all the incumbent parties.

[Shemi] Why would Poland not follow in the footsteps of the Soviets who have been advancing toward normalization? Does it want to remain only an observer?

[Rakowski] Poland is not just an observer, but it has limited resources compared to a superpower like the Soviet Union. That is obvious.

[Shemi] Is that the only reason underlying Poland's moves?

[Rakowski] Yes, that is the only reason.

[Shemi] What are the prospects of cooperation between Poland and Israel?

[Rakowski] As far as I am concerned, a significant development has occurred in cultural relations. We are interested in economic cooperation, but that requires willingness on both sides. I have not found too much interest as far as economic cooperation is concerned. This does not stem from prejudice, but from the fact that the Israeli economy operates differently and is interested in other markets. This lack of interest also stems from the absence of economic relations for many years. [passage omitted]

[Shemi] Is it possible that the Communist Party may find itself in the minority?

[Rakowski] The Communist Party will definitely find itself in the minority in the next elections. It will gain a majority by forming a coalition with two parties that are not its satellites at present. But the Communist Party will do everything possible not to find itself in the opposition. It will not resort to dictatorial methods in the future in order to keep its position. [passage omitted]

New Orders Issued on Taking Down Slogans, Flags

TA0703201389 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Citing the danger involved, the IDF has issued a new order forbidding soldiers to force inhabitants of the territories to climb electricity poles to remove slogans and flags. The military judge advocate's office told this today to Knesset Member Amnon Rubinstein of Shinuy.

Our correspondent Beni Liss reports that in the next few days another order is to be issued forbidding the confiscation of identity cards as a form of punishment or harassment.

Paper Reports Conflicting Casualty Tolls

TA0803132789 Tel Aviv HA'OLAM HAZE in Hebrew 8 Mar 89 p 10

[Report by Orit Zerubavel]

[Text] On Monday, 6 February, the Israel Defense Forces [IDF] spokesman reported 307 Palestinian casualties in the occupied territories. This figure includes only individuals killed by IDF gunfire.

According to HA'OLAM HAZE's count, the number of Palestinian casualties has reached 414.

Palestinian sources, on the other hand, have records of 513 dead, according to the following breakdown:

—347 dead from IDF soldiers' and settlers' gunfire;

—43 dead from beatings and electrocutions;

—71 dead as a result of gas inhalation;

—52 dead from other causes.

Further on Incidents, Casualties in Territories

30 Reported Hurt in Gaza Riots

TA0703163789 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Riots have been reported in numerous locations in the Gaza Strip. Local inhabitants report 30 people wounded, but IDF knows of only 4 wounded. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the IDF had to resort to force this morning to rescue soldiers who were attacked by UNRWA employees in their office compound during a chase after stone-throwers. Local inhabitants report that IDF troops also entered an UNRWA clinic in the Jabalyah refugee camp and dispersed stone-throwers who had barricaded themselves in the clinic.

A curfew was imposed this morning on Rafah's Shabura neighborhood for fears that riots might erupt following the death of the security prisoner in Gaza Prison. Curfews remain in effect in Bayt Hanun and Bayt Lahiyah.

Two rioters were injured by IDF gunfire in Hebron. A curfew was clamped on the Balatah refugee camp near Nabulus just as a riot erupted when alleys were being sealed. [Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 7 March reports that this morning "the IDF sealed two alleys in the Balatah refugee camp and three alleys in the 'Askar refugee camp in the Nabulus District."] Curfews remain in effect in Nabulus and the Nur al-Shams refugee camp near Tulkarm.

2 Reserve Soldiers Sentenced

TA0703180089 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Two more reserve soldiers have been sentenced to prison terms for refusing to serve in the territories. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that one of them was sentenced to 14 days for refusing to serve in the Qezi'ot detention installation; the other was sentenced to 28 days for refusing to serve in Nabulus.

Soldier Slightly Wounded

TA0703202189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] An IDF soldier was slightly wounded when he was hit in the head by a stone during disturbances in the Jabalyah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip this evening. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the wounded soldier was evacuated to the Barzilay Hospital in Ashqelon this evening.

Curfews Lifted; Strike Staged

TA0803064189 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0600 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] This morning the curfew imposed on Nabulus was lifted, but the area is still termed a closed military zone. Curfews were also lifted in Bayt Hanun and Bayt Lahiyah in the Gaza Strip. This was reported by our correspondent Moti Amir. A curfew remains in effect in the Jabalyah refugee camp and the Shabura neighborhood in Rafah.

A general strike is being staged today in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip upon orders by the Unified National Command of the Uprising.

Early this morning, a curfew was imposed on the village of 'Isawiyah in East Jerusalem. Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that the curfew was imposed by decree of the commander of the Central Command to enable detentions and searches.

5 Said Wounded in Gaza Riots

TA0803124389 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] In downtown Gaza this morning, Israel Defense Force [IDF] soldiers dispersed a demonstration by women for a Palestinian state and against occupation. This morning, disturbances were reported in Gaza, and local residents reported that more than five persons were wounded by IDF soldiers' gunfire. The IDF sprayed rioters in Gaza with painted water, and later detained some 20 students who threw stones at the soldiers.

Our correspondent Moti Amir adds that quiet prevailed in the Ramallah District and that the general strike is being fully observed.

Data on Unrest in Israeli Arab Areas Reported

TA0703155389 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Since the beginning of the uprising in the territories, some 530 incidents motivated by nationalism have been registered in Arab villages in the Galilee, the Triangle, and the Haifa District. Half of the incidents occurred in the Wadi 'Ara region.

Albert Musafia, commander of the Police's Northern District, said that some 700 people had been arrested on suspicion of having taken part in the incidents. Our correspondent Yo'el Dar points out that the incidents involved throwing firebombs and stones, uprooting trees, writing hostile graffiti, and hoisting PLO flags.

King Husayn Addresses University Students 7 Mar
JN0703225889 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1828 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Speech by King Husayn to students from the Universities of Jordan and Al-Yarmuk in the Royal Palace in Amman on 7 March—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate: I am extremely happy to have this opportunity to meet with my brothers in this house, which belongs to all of you. I would like to express my pride in you and my great hopes. For me, life is duty and a responsibility, mainly toward the future generations. These generations are our trust. We pray that God grant us success in handing the banner on to you to raise as an Arab banner, and to pass on to you the message so that you may march without pause toward the noble goals that our ancestors pursued. [passage omitted]

In this meeting, we will abandon protocol and formal words and discuss all issues in the time given to us—which is up to you because I have nothing scheduled today except this meeting. We will examine our current situation and then I will give you the opportunity to comment or even to add to our ideas with new observations that might be useful to us and to our goals; namely, serving this nation, defending its rights, and doing everything possible for future generations. These are connected themes. We begin with the first and central cause, which began at the turn of this century with the Great Arab Revolt; namely, the Palestinian issue. [passage omitted]

Since 1967 to this day, a phenomenon has existed that I must mention, though briefly: that phenomenon is found in the sustained efforts to prevent this country, which stands along the longest line of confrontation, from obtaining its full military requirements and fulfilling its potential in other aspects of life to enable it to confront the threat that faces it and the Arab homeland and indeed the entire Arab nation.

In 1974, Rabat Arab summit took place. The discussions were very clear. We formed part of the Arab consensus that regarded the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. [passage omitted]

On the international level, the picture has changed in less than a year— changed beyond anyone's imagination. The new Soviet leadership came to a realization that compelled it to move quickly and persuade others, such as the United States and the rest of the world, of the truth of this realization, namely that there is no benefit, reason, or justification for the continuation of the arms race or for the possession weapons of mass destruction, which can destroy the world many times over. [passage omitted]

The Soviet Union is continuing its initiative to solve the Middle East problem. Most states, including the EC, are involved in this. We have made great progress through contacts with the leaders of these states, and China, and their positions have become more positive. We single out the EC because two of its members are permanent UN Security Council member-states—Britain and France.

There is also a new situation in the United States. The United States, like the Soviet Union, is suffering a great financial deficit. During the election campaign, the new president stressed that he would not increase taxes. He has to deal with a Senate and a House of Representatives where the majority of members are not from his party. The only way he can fulfill his campaign promise is, I believe, to reduce arms in cooperation with the other superpower. If this is his conviction, the issue must be tackled in this way. This issue threatens all that has been achieved, or can be achieved in the future, and endangers the new tendency to solve problems and alleviate tensions in the world.

The new [U.S.] President has experience in international affairs—he has served as his country's representative to the United Nations; he has visited this region and he is well-informed and wise. He has been accused for some time of having a weak voice over the past 8 years. However, it would be fair to say that as a vice president he was loyal to the man who chose him as his aide and deputy. The former president may have been capable of focusing on some world issues and affairs, but they did not include the Middle East. He left U.S. foreign policy to his secretary of state, who, for one reason or another, began gradually and increasingly to come under the effect of extremist Israeli opinion—that of the Israeli right wing.

The situation is different now: There is a new team and an urgent need to resolve issues and problems wherever they are and the most dangerous of them is the issue we have right here in this part of the world. Therefore, we hope it will receive its due care and attention, which should be concentrated on establishing the rights of the land's original owners and returning their land to them.

All this required a definite Arab position. We sought an Arab summit and tried the impossible. We wanted an Arab summit attended by Egypt, leading directly to Egypt's return to the Arab League. We also wanted to emphasize the issue of the Arab League, the oldest regional institution in the world. Regrettably, however, its performance and action leaves something to be desired. We were dutybound in any summit meeting to reread the charter. I believe that the charter itself does not stipulate that every resolution must be taken on a unanimous basis, but by a majority, whose resolutions are binding.

We should revive the Arab League so that it can coordinate among us and achieve the desired results. We wanted a summit to support the Palestinian cause but

without intervention in Palestinian affairs. We wanted a summit to achieve—and through our efforts in Jordan in particular, if possible— a reconciliation and a clearing of the atmosphere between Arab brethren, especially between Syria and Egypt and Syria and Iraq. We wanted a summit to deal with Lebanon, this fraternal Arab country that has suffered so much and should not be abandoned. [passage omitted]

It was proposed that if the summit could not take place in Saudi Arabia, it could be held in Iraq or Jordan. We said we are ready. However, there is a new restriction: some parties will attend a summit only if it is devoted to the Palestine question exclusively, but we agreed that topics of discussion must not be imposed on Arab summits. Arab leaders have the right to discuss any topic. And why a summit to discuss the Palestine question only? The Palestine question now needs nothing more than support for the Palestinian initiative. Therefore, we are waiting to see what the exact picture will be. However, we will continue work toward a meeting, God willing, and cooperate on the widest level.

On the other hand, the Arab Cooperation Council is a reality consisting of 80 million Arabs. It fills an important place in the Arab world, coming out of great efforts and the absolute conviction of leaders and, God be praised, peoples. There has been a sound and careful beginning. We plan to meet four times this year, at least, at the summit level. Our next meeting will be in Cairo, God willing, after the 'Id. Meetings after that will be in Sanaa and Amman and the prime ministers will have similar meetings.

Currently, papers and studies are being exchanged. We have not set limits on this cooperation—all fields are being studied, as in the past. Officials are meeting to arrive at an opinion—not one of four opinions, but a consensus, which is the fifth opinion incorporating all opinions and ideas. We will, God willing, require such consensus. We will do our utmost to make this group respected and influential. At the same time, it is open for others to join the group if they wish.

We have faced some financial problems here in Jordan recently. Once again, the issue, very simply, is that this country's military and civilian debts amount to less than the obligations of our brothers toward us as stipulated by the Baghdad summit. In the first place, the Baghdad summit did not suppose that the problem would end after 10 years. It was a beginning. Annual Arab summits were supposed to discuss and compare our situation with that of our adversary, and to provide the required needs. We took the obligations as a fact and dealt with the matter cautiously, however. We purchased weapons and began projects and construction. Had it not been for this indebtedness, which is actually less than the Arab obligations to us, this country would now be standing on its feet. The country has achieved a miracle by making this much progress. Had the obligations been met, our revenues would have been sufficient, even with an Army like ours. The issue has been under constant scrutiny and consideration. God be praised, our country has credibility in the world and our efforts to preserve this credibility force us to suffer in order to honor our commitments—some of which are debts and a big part, regrettably, is servicing these debts. In the past few years, we were forced to borrow and repay to preserve our credibility. We are now in rescheduling these debts. We have passed, God be praised, through the tricky and difficult phase. However, we must stress that we should live within our means in the future and not put ourselves in need again; not place ourselves in a position similar to what we have suffered. God willing, it will be a passing phase, and with the latest measures stabilizing the dinar, we hope the picture will improve. [passage omitted]

Reviewing the past, we see many obstacles and solutions, which we experienced ourselves. Their features are clear. It has dawned on us that even this situation, or the experience of the recent past, could perhaps have been a part of a bigger scheme which was not in our mind when we decided to sever ties with the West Bank because we sensed that we were performing our duty toward our kinfolk and brothers.

At any rate, our policies in this country are derived from our conscience, from our affiliation to this nation, from our Arabism, and from our eagerness to serve its future generations. We do not derive these policies from any party whatsoever in this world. [passage omitted]

God bless you all. If there are any questions or comments, I am ready to answer. [applause]

[Unidentified student] Your Majesty the King, your efforts have had a significant effect on winning the support of U.S. and European public opinion for the Middle East issue in general and the Palestine question in particular. Besides, your efforts have had a strong impact on helping our kinfolk in the occupied territories. However, we see a great disparity in the degrees of the European and U.S. enthusiasm for these moves despite the fact that the United States holds the pressure cards to push Israel to the negotiating table of the international peace conference. We kindly request Your Majesty to clarify this for us.

[Husayn] Yes sir, this is the truth and the reality. However, I believe that the United States is currently facing a new situation. It is in the interest of the United States itself to take a new position, but the question needs time before positions become finally clear. I met with President Bush in Tokyo to discuss this.

On the subject of Japan, our relations with that country, with the [imperial] family there, and with the late emperor, are of long standing. God willing, Japan will have great influence in the future. Japan currently ranks highest in the world in the amount of aid that it offers,

replacing the United States in this regard. The outlines of its political role have begun to appear more clearly and it agrees with us in all of our stands.

The man [not further identified] seems to be serious and interested. Soviet-U.S. dialogue is continuing—I believe that they have a meeting at the foreign- minister level today or tomorrow. The European position has also changed: It always used to focus on the UK because of its notable influence on the United States. The UK used to lag behind Europe, but now it leads the Europeans in efforts to influence the United States in world affairs.

I believe that they must take time to contact all parties and arrange things. Regarding the international conference, very soon there will be efforts to arrange meetings between the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and the UN secretary general to prepare for the international conference. This conference must be attended by the PLO as representative of the Palestinians and by the other parties to the conflict in order to implement Resolution 242 to resolve all aspects and dimensions of the Palestine question.

Nothing is guaranteed in this world. However, there is a trend throughout the world toward resolving issues and problems peacefully. This problem could threaten this trend and the yearning and ideals behind it. Hence, it is in the people's interest to focus on it, irrespective of the ethical dimension of the cause of justice and right that must be addressed.

We must work. Therefore, we are attempting to organize ourselves in the Arab world to be more effective, God willing. [passage omitted]

[Second unidentified student] The establishment of Israel came about due to a decision by the United Nations. This decision also included an understanding to establish a Palestinian state. What does Your Majesty think, now that the Palestinian state is a reality, is behind Israeli belligerence, the international community's silence, and the rejection of international resolutions?

[Husayn] Let us discuss Israel first: So far, 54 percent of Israelis support dialogue with the PLO and withdrawal from the occupied land. As for Jews in the rest of the world, in the United States for example, they are deeply divided. There is no doubt that Israeli officials are very shortsighted and are not thinking about the future. However, pressure on them is increasing from the whole world. I cannot prophesy about the result, but the picture now is reversed. I remember the time after 1967, my actions in the world, and how people viewed us then. Israel is now in a worse situation than we were then. This must be taken into account and will definitely have an effect.

Our cause is just and strong. God willing, we will achieve our goals.

[Third unidentified student] [words indistinct] The establishment of the Arab Cooperation Council. On the other hand, there are the Gulf Cooperation Council and Arab Maghreb Union. Are these groupings alternatives to the Arab League?

[Husayn] No. The duty of the Arab League is to act now and coordinate among the three.

[Fourth unidentified student] International detente between the United States and the Soviet Union dominates the international arena. This detente has come about since the early 1970's and is the result of many factors. Recently, especially under Gorbachev but also under the new Goerge Bush administration, this detente has been entrenched. Your Majesty, the Arabs have failed to impose the Palestine question, with all its worries and problems, on the international arena. This failure was not due to the lack of interest of the United States or the Soviet Union in this region, but was a result of divisions and disagreements between the Arabs. This political division has damaged the image of the Arabs in the international arena.

Recently, we noticed a ray of hope, namely the Arab economic grouping, in which Your Majesty—and I say this with pride as a Jordanian citizen—played a major and fundamental role. We are very happy with this economic grouping. We now hope to bring about a new Arab unity. My question, Your Majesty, concerns the role of this Arab grouping, which was established with an economic nucleus and was preceded by effective political coordination in which Your Majesty, as I said earlier, played a large role. What is its role in promoting the Palestine question in the international arena and also presenting it to the United States and Soviet Union?

[Husayn] We fervently hope that it would play an effective and influential role. We are still studying the possibilities. As you said, on the political level, there is no problem whatsoever and we have complete understanding on the economic level. The results of this cooperation and these meetings can be applied in all areas of world affairs. We are now studying the situation and will continue our work, knowing that, on the political level, our position is firm. We support the Palestinian cause with all our resources and capabilities. We ought now to set a program for our work. [passage omitted]

King Husayn Receives PLO's Mahmud 'Abbas

JN0703193489 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas At the Royal Hashemite Court today. Mr 'Abbas conveyed to his

majesty a message from PLO Executive Comittee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat concerning recent Palestinian political meetings and the progress of the Palestinian cause on the international scene resulting from the clear strategic policy of the PLO defined by the Algiers Palestine National Council resolutions.

His Majesty King Husayn explained to Mr 'Abbas Jordan's his opinion on several aspects of the Palestinian question. His majesty praised the PLO's policy and expressed Jordan's complete support and backing for it. This policy has proved its effectiveness in regaining Palestinian national rights and the PLO's ability to crown the Palestinian people's legitimate struggle with victory and success.

The meeting was attended by the prime minister, the chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, and his majesty's political adviser.

Foreign Minister Meets 'Abbas

JN0703165789 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Marwan al-Qasim, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, received in his office this afternoon Mahmud 'Abbas, member of the PLO Executive Committee. During the meeting, they exchanged views on Jordanian-Palestinian relations.

Al-Qasim held a luncheon banquet in honor of Mr 'Abbas.

British Embassy Advises UK Nationals To Leave

NC0803103789 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] The British Embassy in Beirut released a statement today advising British citizens not to travel to Lebanon as a result of the writer Salman Rushdie issue. The statement said that the British Foreign Office advises British nationals not to visit Lebanon and, more importantly, travelers to Lebanon must not go to West Beirut, Beirut Airport, and other areas, including Al-Biqa' plain, Al-'Urqub, southern Lebanon, or areas north of Tripoli. The embassy advises British citizens already in these areas to leave as quickly as possible.

Group Threatens To Attack UK Guards of Rushdie

NC0803140289 Paris AFP in English 1352 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Beirut, March 8 (AFP)—A clandestine group holding two U.S. hostages in Lebanon announced Wednesday it was ready to kill British author Salman Rushdie, whose death has been ordered by Iranian spiritual guide Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni.

The Organization of Revolutionary Justice (ORJ), in a statement sent to a Western news agency here, said it was "determined to attack police positions" potecting Mr. Rushdie, whose novel "The Satanic Verses" has been condemned in the Moslem world as blaspheming Islam.

The Indian-born author is currently under police guard at a secret location in Britain, where his novel was published last September.

The ORJ statement warned that Britain would be responsible for any "human losses" within its police force.

The warning was accompanied by a color photograph of Edward Tracy, a writer and book salesman abducted in mainly Moslem West Beirut in October 1986.

The ORJ statement came as Bitain warned its citizens Wednesday not to travel to Lebanon and urged those Britons already in the country to avoid Moslem areas because of the bitter row over "The Satanic Verses." [passage omitted]

'Awn Backs Arab Efforts, Friendly Ties With Syria

NC0703212589 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] General Michel 'Awn has renewed his support for any Arab effort aimed at solving the Lebanese crisis. He said he wants friendly relations with Syria and said: Let us regard these relations as distinctive. He affirmed that the minimum required is the realization of greater Beirut. He announced that the Army in West Beirut needs rehabilitation for 2 or 3 months and described the dispatch of the Army to the south as part of the tendency to impose the legitimate authority in Lebanese areas. Gen 'Awn noted the need for integration among the Lebanese sects and creeds.

'Awn Opens Museum Crossing to Supply Trucks

NC0703214489 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2115 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] The Guidance Directorate at the Army Command issued a statement tonight announcing that in view of the closure of the Beirut port crossing and to facilitate the citizens' daily affairs, the prime minister and Army commander, General Michel 'Awn, has decided to reopen the museum crossing for all types of supply trucks day and night. The decision is effective immediately.

Lebanese Forces Assail West Beirut Stands

NC0703181589 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The Lebanese Forces Command Council held its weekly meeting under Dr Samir Ja'ja' and reviewed the general situation from all angles. It then issued the following statement:

First, the Lebanese Forces Command Council discussed the stands of the Al-Sana'i' grouping [Al-Huss cabinet] concerning the closure of illegal ports and the issue of the Beirut crossings. The council registered its astonishment that certain political forces which claim to be concerned about the state's power and the public interests would reverse their proclaimed policies overnight. These forces have for some time been calling for the closure of illegal ports; however, after the Lebanese Forces closed the fifth dockyard, these forces reversed their positions and refused to honor their commitments.

It is obvious to all the Lebanese that these forces are not seeking to establish the state's power or to strengthen the Treasury's public revenues. They are seeking to create disturbances in the free Lebanese areas and are resorting to cheap incitement to sabotage these areas from the inside, following the failure of similarly motivated outside attempts by Syria and its allies.

Second, the Lebanese Forces Command Council examined Walid Junblatt's stand on the refugees issue. Junblatt cancelled the initiative that he made about 2 months ago, in which he called for the return of Christian refugees to the mountain.

The Lebanese Forces were not surprised by the dramatic termination of Junblatt's initiative, for such an end had been expected from the very beginning. The Lebanese Forces regret that the issue of the refugees is used from time to time for narrow political ends by politicians who may have many goals in mind but care little about arranging for a dignified return of those refugees to their homes.

The Lebanese Forces also deplore the ugly campaigns against the Lebanese spiritual authorities, particularly Bkirki [the Maronite Patriarchate]. [passage omitted]

Police, Syrian Soldiers Clash in West Beirut
NC0703202889 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1945 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] According to security reports from West Beirut, the Syrian occupation forces and the internal security forces emergency squad have carried out reciprocal kidnappings in a number of neighborhoods this evening. These events took place in the wake of a dispute which broke out between the occupation forces and two emergency squad members in the Al-Hamra' district [of West Beirut]. The two gendarmes returned to their squad headquarters and soon afterward a Syrian force under the command of 1st Lieutenant Ma'kaz surrounded the building. The two gendarmes were forced to surrender.

Later a police patrol stopped a Syrian officer near the Saudi Embassy in Ra's Bayrut. Negotiations are currently taking place between the two sides for the release of the kidnapped.

We note here that at about 1700 today shots were heard near the Orly movie theater in Al-Hamra'. It transpired that a clash took place between two emergency squad members and one of the occupation soldiers, who was hit in the hand.

Syrians Seize Booby-Trapped Car 8 Mar
NC0803074689 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] At 0730 today, the Syrian intelligence personnel in Khaldah became suspicious of a BMW car bearing plate number 706237 while it was trying to pass through the checkpoint there. The car was searched and found to contain 50 kg of highly explosive TNT as well as hand grenades and detonators wired to timers. The device was dismantled and the driver was arrested. The driver admitted that he belongs to an 'Arafat-led group and that he came from Sidon to blow up the car in Beirut. The device was planted in a spare empty fuel tank.

Syria To Send Hizballah Fighters To South
NC0803154189 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Today's edition of the French magazine LE POINT said Damascus wants to use Hizballah to block the way to a rapprochement between the Amal Movement and the pro-'Arafat Fatah. It disclosed that Damascus is seeking to transfer approximately 800 Hizballah fighters from Beirut's southern suburb to the South.

Group Claims Attack on Syrian Army Post in Beirut
NC0803100289 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] The Khalil 'Akkawi unit of the 9 February Organization has claimed reponsibility for a hand grenade and machinegun attack on a Syrian occupation army position in Al-Musaytibah area [in West Beirut] last night, inflicting three casualties among the Syrians.

PSP Reportedly Deploys Missiles at Al-Jiyah
NC0703210389 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Security sources have reported that the Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] militia have deployed SAM-7 missiles in the vicinity of Al-Jiyah Port and tht orders were given to fire them at Lebanese Air Force aircraft if they intercept any ship entering the port.

PSP-Held Port Fires at Army Gunboat 7 Mar
NC0803062989 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] The military clique led by Michel 'Awn continues to toughen its attitude and persists in blockading the Al-Shuf coast. A gunboat belonging to the military clique of Al-Yarzah [East Beirut Army headquarters] tried to approach the Al-Damur shore yesterday afternoon. Ground forces in the area confronted it, forcing it to keep away from the shore. Earlier in the morning a Hawker Hunter belonging to the Al-Yarzah clique flew over the coast from Al-Damur up to Al-Na'imah, but antiaircraft fire confronted it, forcing it to flee.

Michel 'Awn, head of the military clique, who chaired a meeting with officers Ma'luf and Abu Jamrah, declared his insistence on imposing naval and air blockades of the ports which he called illegal.

VOL Notes SLA-Fundamentalist Clash 7 Mar
NC0703214389 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] A South Lebanese Army [SLA] spokesman has said that an SLA force advanced behind the Kafr Falus front line in a lightning and sudden operation carried out today. He added that the force clashed with fundamentalist gunmen in the area before returning to base.

Meanwhile, an explosive delvice went off tonight on the military road between 'Ayn al-Mir and Marah al-Habbal. A number of fundamentalist gunmen were injured and two of their vehicles were damaged.

Amal Resistance Attacks Israeli-Lahd Positions

NC0803123189 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] An Amal resistance group used machineguns and rockets to attack a joint Israeli-Lahd patrol as it was passing on the Al-Tuhrah-al-Suwayda' road this morning. The resistance fighters managed to inflict casualties on the patrol personnel. Meanwhile, the resistance artillery pounded the Al-Tuhrah and Al-Suwayda' positions with mortarfire, scoring direct hits. Shortly afterward, the Israeli troops bombarded Kafr Umman and brought in additional troops to the operation scene and transported the dead and wounded to the occupied border strip.

The resistance issued a statement on the operation, saying that in view of the operation, the enemy tried to enter the Kafr Rumman town but was confrotned by resistance ambushes. Clashes involving the use of various types of weapons broke out between the two sides.

In a similar development, a resistance group attacked with seven RPG's an Israeli-Lahd position in 'Alman at 0700 today.

Israeli Troops Attack Norwegian Contingent

NC0803064189 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Excerpt] The Israeli occupation forces have stepped up their attacks on the occupied and liberated areas in the south. The Israeli attacks did not spare the UN forces' positions there. Meanwhile, the Israeli occupation authorities continue to reinforce their military positions in a number of areas. Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council, has warned against a major Israeli offensive against Lebanon and called for cementing efforts to confront this expected offensive which aims to undermine Lebanon's decisionmaking and sovereignty.

Meanwhile, tension is simmering between the Norwegian positions on the one hand and the Israeli forces and their agents on the other in the Ibil al-Saqy area. The unrest occurs in the wake of a clash which broke out between a Norwegian checkpoint and an Israeli tank force which tried to enter the village by force yesterday. The Israeli force attacked the checkpoint and the personnel manning it and destroyed three UN armored cars. The force managed to enter and search the village for 2 hours. The force, however, withdrew in the wake of contacts between the commander of the Norwegian contingent and the Israeli command.

AFP cites a UN forces source as saying that the Israeli army has closed two points used by the UN forces to cross between the occupied and liberated areas in the south. [passage omitted]

Israeli Aircraft Fly Over Beirut, Draw Fire

NC0803095789 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Israeli military aircraft flew at low altitude over the capital at 1100 today, drawing ground fire from the southern suburbs.

Aircraft Seen Over South

NC0803152089 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1457 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Flights by Israeli warplanes were observed this afternoon over Al-Tayyibah, 'Alman, and Al-Shumariyah in the South.

Afghanistan

Rebels Launch Attacks on Jalalabad Airport

BK0803074089 Hong Kong AFP in English 0719 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 8 (AFP)—Afghan resistance guerrillas launched a series of attacks overnight against the heavily-fortified airport of Jalalabad and overran a garrison near the eastern city, rebel sources said Wednesday [8 March].

The sources here said mujahidin guerrillas had captured the important garrison at Samar Khel, about 10 kilometers (six miles) from Jalalabad, located midway between Kabul and the Pakistani border.

Mujahidin were currently fighting for the airport east of Jalalabad, and several hundred soldiers of the Soviet-backed Najibullah government had been captured, the rebel sources said.

They said guerrillas led by the Islamic fundamentalist Hezb-e Eslami Khalis faction had launched attacks on the airport in four different places. Rebels fired rockets on the city and the airport, destroying two planes, they said.

There was some hand-to-hand fighting between Hezb-e Eslami Khalis guerrillas and government soldiers, the sources said.

The offensive against Jalalabad, the country's third-largest city, comes one day ahead of the planned meeting inside Afghanistan of an interim resistance government formed at a meeting in Pakistan last month.

'Heavy' Casualties Reported

BK0803103689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1007 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 8 (AFP)—Afghan resistance guerrillas launched a series of attacks overnight on the eastern city of Jalalabad and captured an important garrison nearby, rebel sources said Wednesday.

The sources here said resistance guerrillas, known as mujahidin, had captured the garrison at Samar Khel, about 10 kilometers from Jalalabad, located midway between Kabul and the Pakistani border.

Samar Khel was one of the last garrisons held by Afghan Army regulars.

The sources said that mujahidin had launched an offensive against Jalalabad on several fronts, including an attack on the heavily-fortified airport east of the city.

"Hundreds of Afghan troops and five tanks were captured" during the fighting for Jalalabad airport, one source said, adding that much of the combat was hand-to-hand.

Several artillery pieces defending the airport were captured by the mujahidin, an eye-witness who returned from the area told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, and two mujahidin commanders have been killed.

There has been heavy loss of life on both sides, according to eye-witnesses.

Guerrillas led by the Islamic fundamentalist Hezb-e Eslami Khalis and the moderate Islamic National Front were firing rockets on the city itself and on the airport, destroying two aircraft, resistance sources said.

The initial mujahidin objective appears to be to capture the airport, where reinforcements and supplies have been arriving for the city of some 100,000 people since the road linking Jalalabad and Kabul was cut by rebel groups.

"I've never seen so many mujahidin ... thousands of reinforcements have been pouring in," an eye-witness said.

"About 30 ambulances have been running back and forth on the road between Jalalabad and Towr Kham on the Pakistan border. Many trucks have been bringing weapons to the attackers," he added.

Some 10,000 mujahidin have grouped in the area surrounding Jalalabad, according to resistance sources.

Between 10,000 and 12,000 troops of the Soviet-backed Najibullah government are defending the city, Afghanistan's third largest after Kabul and Qandahar.

Mujahidin commanders have a three-phase plan for Jalalabad: to capture the airport, then the well-defended barracks east of the city, and finally the city itself, informed sources said.

Some mujahidin sources said the attack on Jalalabad had been planned for two or three days from now, but was launched during the night after the moderate resistance group decided to begin bombing the city Wednesday.

The pro-resistance AFGHAN NEWS AGENCY said Wednesday that the first meeting of an interim resistance government inside Afghanistan which had been scheduled for Thursday, had been postponed to Friday.

Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, named as head of state by Pakistan-based resistance groups on February 23 at Rawalpindi in Pakistan, is to address "the Afghan nation" Wednesday evening from Peshawar in northwestern Pakistan.

Jalalabad Airport Captured

LD0803112189 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1100 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Peshawar, 8 Mar (SPA)—The Afghan mujahidin today captured Jalalabad airport. Jalalabad is the third largest Afghan city. The mujahidin also captured the garrison of Samar Khel, which is about 10km away from Jalalabad.

Afghan mujahidin sources today confirmed that the mujahidin were engaged in fierce battles against the forces of the ruling communist regime last night and at dawn today, before capturing the airport and garrison.

The sources pointed out that capturing the garrison has opened the way for the whole city to fall into the hands of the mujahidin.

The sources reported that the mujahidin have inflicted heavy losses in lives and equipment on the communist forces, and they have captured hundreds of soldiers.

Mojaddedi Confirms Capture

BK0803121289 Hong Kong AFP in English 1159 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 8 (AFP)—Afghan resistance guerrillas have captured Jalalabad airport as fighting escalated for the capture of the strategic eastern garrison city Wednesday, resistance chief Sibghatullah Mojaddedi here said.

Mr. Mojaddedi who is also president of the rebels' interim government told newsmen that the mujahidin were also in control of the Jalalabad cantonment.

The rebel mujahidin launched their all-out offensive on Jalalabad overnight and after a fierce battle over-ran the Samar Khel garrison which was the regime's main defence line to protect the city's eastern flank.

The mujahidin were continuing their advance after the fall of Samar Khel garrison, resistance sources said. The guerrillas engaged in fierce fighting, and were approaching the city from four sides, they said.

Earlier reports said hand-to-hand fighting was going on in and around the airport and the rebels had seized its defense battery.

Mr. Mojaddedi said he had received a wireless message saying that the airport fell to mujahidin around noon.

Several sources said mujahidin were closing in on Jalalabad and rebel rockets were falling inside the city.

Jalalabad, the third largest Afghan city and the first across Pakistan's north western frontiers had been the rebels' main target since Soviet troops left Afghanistan last month, observers said.

The rebels' two-week old interim government was scheduled to hold its first session Thursday near Jalalabad.

But the first meeting inside Afghanistan has now been delayed until Friday because of the attack, the pro-resistance AFGHAN NEWS AGENCY (ANA) said.

A resistance official here said that "insha Allah (God willing) the cabinet will meet in Jalalabad."

ANA said mujahidin have also entered the city and fierce fighting was raging in Jalalabad itself. Troops have retreated from some suburban areas, other sources said.

The resistance-run ANA said "utter confusion and panic" prevailed among the Afghan Government troops after the fall of the Samar Khel garrison, the city's key line of defence.

A large number of regular troops were seen joining the mujahidin while others "deserted in panic leaving behind their arms and equipment," it said, quoting eye-witnesses and commanders.

The Samar Khel garrison, considered the backbone of the defence of Jalalabad and Kabul, "could not sustain the well-coordinated mujahidin attack even for a few hours,"it said.

Kabul Airport Closed; Rocket Attacks Feared

BK0803114089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1118 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Kabul, March 8 (AFP)—The Afghan military closed Kabul airport Wednesday afternoon and turned back passengers trying to board a flight to New Delhi saying rocket attacks were expected.

An AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE reporter trying to enter Kabul airport at two p.m. local time was turned back by a militia man who gave the reason as "enemy rockets," a term used to refer to the mujahidin.

It was not clear whether rockets had fallen in the vicinity of the Kabul airport, but puffs of dust could be seen rising from the surrounding foothills.

The closure, which was unannounced, appeared to be the first precautionary closure of the airport, where rockets caused heavy casualties last year.

It followed a warning Tuesday from Pakistan-based mujahidin fighting the government of President Najibullah that they plan to launch simultaneous attacks on government-held cities including Kabul in the next few days. [passage omitted]

Reopens After 2 Hours

BK0803160689 Hong Kong AFP in English 1557 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Excerpt] Kabul, March 8 (AFP)—Five civilians were killed when two rockets fired by mujahidin rebels Wednesday exploded near Kabul airport, state-television reported.

The station said one of the rockets hit a house near the airport complex killing five civilians. The second caused no casualties, it added.

The Afghan military temporarily closed the airport for two hours and turned back passengers trying to board a flight for New Delhi after the rockets landed.

Earlier reports said a single rocket fired by the rebels had exploded near the heavily-guarded airport leading to its closure for two hours.

The rockets exploded at about 2 p.m. local time (0930 GMT) and the military stopped passengers and crew heading for a Delhi-bound Ariana Airlines flight saying more rocket attacks were expected.

An AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE reporter trying to enter the airport was turned back by a militia man at almost the same time the rocket slammed near the complex.

The closure appeared to be the first precautionary closure of the airport, where rockets caused heavy casualties last year.

Two hours later the airport was reopened and a security guard said that it would remain open. He said that an early morning cargo flight had left for New Delhi and that two planes bound for the Soviet Union, one for Tashkent and a second for Moscow, had been able to take off. [passage omitted]

Mojaddedi To Address Nation From Peshawar

BK0803023089 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] The first cabinet session of the interim Afghan government is expected to be held somewhere near Jalalabad in Nangarhar tomorrow morning. Professor Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, the president of the interim government, will address the nation this afternoon. According to the AFGHAN NEWS AGENCY, the Voice of Afghanistan Radio is to carry the speech at 1600 this afternoon.

Islamabad Reports Speech

BK0803142289 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Professor Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, president of the interim government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, congratulated the Afghan people on their success in [words indistinct] the Soviet troops and the formation of the shura and the interim government.

In his first address to the Afghan nation over Voice of Afghanistan Radio this afternoon, he described the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan as an unprecedented event in world history. On this occasion, he outlined the priorities of his government, which are as follows: The complete elimination of the puppet regime in Kabul; restoration of peace and security throughout the country; the creation of congenial conditions for the return of Afghan refugees to their homeland with honor and safety; and the early holding of free and fair elections.

Peace, Refugees Priorities

BK0803155389 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Professor Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, president of the interim government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, said the restoration of peace and security in the country and the creation of congenial conditions for the return of Afghan refugees to their homeland with honor and safety are among the priorities of his government.

In his first address to the Afghan nation over Voice of Afghanistan Radio today, he said the complete elimination of the puppet regime of Kabul and the early holding of free and fair elections are also included in the priorities of the interim government. He said Islamic teachings and an education system based on Islamic values will be enforced and an Islamic social system will be established in the country.

Concerning the foreign policy of the interim government, Professor Mojaddedi said the independence, sovereignty, and nonaligned status of Afghanistan will be safeguarded. Fraternal ties with Afghanistan's close neighbors—Pakistan, Iran, and other Islamic countries—will be strengthened and a relationship based on mutual understanding and Islamic teachings will be established with other countries of the world.

Sibghatullah Mojaddedi expressed solidarity with the freedom struggle of all the oppressed people of the world and expressed the resolve that Jerusalem will be liberated.

Mojaddedi called upon all countries of the world and the United Nations, international organizations, and the Islamic Conference Organization to recognize the interim government and to assist in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. He also urged the Soviet Union to end its aid to the Kabul regime and instead help in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

The president of the interim government also urged the Iran-based mujahidin to join the interim government and assist in the task of rebuilding Afghanistan. He congratulated the Afghan people who succeeded in their struggle and in the formation of the shura and the interim government after making great sacrifices.

Resistance Cabinet To Meet in 'Liberated Area'

BK0703124889 Hong Kong AFP in English 1243 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Islamabad, March 7 (AFP)—The first meeting of the Afghan resistance's government will be held inside Afghanistan Thursday, resistance sources here said Tuesday.

The cabinet session will be held in the "liberated area," the sources said, but did not identify the place for security reasons.

Other sources here said the meeting will take place probably somewhere across the border in the eastern Nangarhar Province.

The resistance government was formed through an election at a traditional Afghan assembly or shura in Rawalpindi, near here, on February 23.

The shura elected 'Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, leader of the fundamentalist Etehad-e Eslami party its prime minister while moderate leader Sibghatullah Mojaddedi was elected the country's president.

Resistance groups say the government will take over after the collapse of the current Soviet-backed regime in Kabul.

Mr. Mojaddedi will deliver a speech to the Afghan nation on the eve of the government's first meeting, they said.

The rebels' cabinet includes all resistance leaders except Sayyed Ahmed Gaylani of the moderate National Islamic Front of Afghanistan (NIFA) who is abroad.

Each party has three ministries but, under a formula the shura devised, the parties having their president and prime minister will be entitled to only one additional portfolio.

Mr. Gaylani has, however, not named his party's ministers and some cabinet posts were lying vacant for the Iran-based eight party Shi'ite rebels who, in a dispute on the representation quota, had boycotted the shura.

The sources said rebel foreign minister Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, currently in Tehran, is negotiating with the minority community leader Karim Khalili over participation in the resistance government.

Mr. Hikmatyar, who also met with senior government officials including Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati, is meeting President 'Ali Khamene'i later Tuesday.

In a message to his party Mr. Hikmatyar said Tuesday he was optimistic that Iran would be the first country to recognize the resistance government, the sources said.

Mr. Hikmatyar is leaving for Saudi Arabia Wednesday to seek diplomatic recognition from Riyadh, they said. He will also visit Iraq and Libya before returning to Riyadh for an Islamic foreign ministers conference opening Monday, they said.

A resistance delegation has already reached Saudi Arabia to lobby for recognition of the mujahidin government at the meeting of officials drafting the agenda for the foreign ministers' conference, they said.

Meeting Scheduled for 10 Mar

BK0803103389 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1000 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] It has now been learned that the first cabinet meeting of the interim Afghan government will be held on Friday [10 March]. Professor Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, president of the interim government, will address the Afghan people this afternoon.

In Afghanistan, the Kabul regime has closed down all educational and government institutions in Jalalabad city and distributed arms among students and teachers.

A total of 10,000 people have also been sent from Konarha Province to defend Jalalabad which is now besieged by the mujahidin.

UN Notified of Pakistani 'Violations' of Accords

Notices 279-281

LD0803071489 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0442 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Kabul, March 7 BAKHTAR—The 279th, 280th and 281st notices of the Republic of Afghanistan on flagrant violations by Pakistan of the provisions of the Geneva accords were submitted by the liaison office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Office of the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) here on Monday [6 March].

In the 279th notice attention of UNGOMAP is focussed on the delivery of armaments including ground to ground rockets, anti-vehicle and anti-personnel mines and other deadly weapons from Pakistan and extremists in Afghanistan.

Dispatch of armaments is a gross violation of the Geneva accords. For its paragraph 2, document number 4 prevents signatories assist terrorists, sabateurs, and plunderers as well as their use against the other side or giving them shelter in their territories.

A list of the explosions and planting of bombs by extremists in the capital and provinces of the country which have caused remarkable human and material losses here is provided to the UNGOMAP in notice number 280. In this notice it is stressed that the extremist groups without the direct aid of the Pakistanis are not able to inflict such losses to the people.

In the 281st notice UNGOMAP is informed on setting fire by extremists to 13 tankers and 2 vehicles loaded with wheat on March 5 in the Qara Bagh District, Kabul Province.

In the notices it is pointed out that interferences of Pakistan in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan especially after the return of the limited military contingents of the Soviet Union back home are intensified.

The notices ask UNGOMAP that on the basis of paragraph 7, document number 4 of the Geneva accords investigate the said violations and convey results of its findings to the related sides immediately.

Notices 282-285

LD0703184589 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] The liaison department of the Foreign Ministry today once again informed the UNGOMAP [UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan] office in Kabul about the open violations of the articles of the Geneva accords by Pakistan in notes nos. 282, 283, 284, and 285.

In note No 282 of the liaison department of the Foreign Ministry, the attention of the UNGOMAP office was drawn to an attack by the extremists, under the protection of Pakistan, on an AN-33 passenger aircraft on 5 March at 0945 on its arrival at the Jalalabad airport. As a result of this attack two women were martyred and four people were injured. It was stated in the note that this criminal action by extremist groups, carried out in close cooperation with Pakistani militia, is contrary to all international norms concerning the security of passenger aircrafts.

Note No 283 of the Foreign Ministry contained detailed information about the aggression of Afghanistan's airspace by a Pakistani Air Force jet aircraft on 5 March at the Darband and (?Gorgut) regions, Nangarhar Province, and stated that such an aerial aggression against our country is indicative of the Pakistani military authorities' foul and interventionist intensions and is completely contrary to the Geneva accords.

It was stated in note No 284 of the Foreign Ministry the list of subversive activities by the extremist groups who, receiving all-round military help from Pakistan, are attacking residential areas and public property with heavy weapons. It was emphasized in the note that the supply of lethal weapons by the militarist authorities of Pakistan to the armed extremists is the major reason for the continuation of war and fratricide in our country.

Detailed and substantial information was supplied in the Foreign Ministry's note No 285 concerning the 250 Pakistani militiamen, who entered on 3 March Nangarhar Province via Towr Kham to take part in subversive actions with extremists in that province, and it was emphasized that the aim of sending these Pakistani militiamen who wore Afghan clothes, is to directly participate in subversive and terrorist actions in Nangarhar Province and around it with the extremist groups.

Envoy to Bulgaria on Need for Political Solution

AU0703103389 Sofia RABOTNICHESKO DELO in Bulgarian 3 Mar 89 p 2

[Report on interview with Merabuddin Paktiawal, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Bulgaria, by Volodya Stratiev in Sofia on 2 March: "Peace and Negotiations Are Our Choice"]

[Text] "The proclamation of the emergency situation in Afghanistan does not mean that we have renounced the policy of national reconciliation," Merabuddin Paktiawal, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Republic of Afghanistan, declared in a statement to journalists on 2 March in Sofia. "We would like once more to declare to the whole world that peace and negotiations are our choice. However, because our enemies have increased their military actions, we are forced to adopt the necessary measures."

The ambassador of Afghanistan stressed that even after the final withdrawal of Soviet troops from his country on 15 February 1989, the combats and the fratricidal war were pursued. Armed opposition units are killing innocent people, destroying entire areas, and causing considerable economic difficulties by invading the country from Pakistan, which represents a gross violation of the Geneva agreements. Let us cite a few specific figures and facts mentioned by the ambassador:

—Pakistan has violated the Geneva agreements in more than 4,800 cases.

—4,000 people from the Pakistani Armed Forces participated in combat in Afghan territory with the opposition groups.

—Currently 650 members of the Pakistani Army are taking part in battles in the area of Khowst.

—200 camps are situated on Pakistani territory, where 40,000 people, who are expected to join the ranks of the opposition, are being trained.

—An average of 40 trucks loaded with weapons and ammunition for the needs of the armed opposition units are dispatched every day from the Pakistani town of Parachinar.

The material and political support of the United States and certain other countries accorded to the irreconcilable opposition is in full contrast with their alleged "concern" about the Afghan people's fate, the ambassador of Afghanistan stated. He also dwelled on the contradictions within the opposition camp, on the refugee problems, and on other questions.

Merabuddin Paktiawal made the following closing statement: The Armed Forces of Afghanistan are ready to resist all ordeals. We have 500,000 armed men and a party with members ready to defend our country. However, we firmly adhere to the national reconciliation policy and are struggling to stop the war in our country through political means.

Merabuddin Paktiawal expressed his gratitude to the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, and the other socialist countries for their assistance in efforts to guarantee peace and national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

Bangladesh

Soviet Ambassador Seeks Improved Relations

BK0603135589 Dhaka SANGBAD in Bengali 24 Feb 89 pp 1, 8

[Excerpts] USSR Ambassador to Bangladesh Vitali S. Smirnov said: Although normal ties exist between the Soviet Union and Bangladesh, I am not satisfied with the present state of relationship. There are great possibilities to improve these relations. He said: I have mentioned this issue at all meetings with the Bangladesh officials. The envoy said that Bangladesh newspapers and news media only present one point of view and do not appreciate the good initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

The Soviet ambassador made this statement while addressing a news conference organized by the ambassadors of six socialist countries in Dhaka yesterday. Statements were also made there by Bulgarian Ambassador Dimitur S. Stanoev, Czechoslovak Ambassador I. Majsajdr, GDR Ambassador Klaus Maeser, Hungarian Charge d'Affaires I.B. Buday, and Polish Ambassador Edward Baradziej.

The envoys mentioned the reduction in arms and armed forces in their respective countries and urged NATO's cooperation in this regard at the arms limitation conference in Vienna next month. The Soviet ambassador asked Bangladesh to play its cooperative role in this drive to reduce arms and armed forces because the limitation of arms will also be in the interest of Bangladesh.

In reply to a question, the Soviet ambassador said that some portion of the money saved from arms reduction could be utilized for the underdeveloped countries like Bangladesh. He said: We helped Bangladesh during its war of liberation and even now we give assistance. I hope that Bangladesh considers the Soviet Union a reliable friend, he added.

Referring to the Afghan situation, the ambassador said: The reports appearing in the Bangladesh press on the Afghan war are not correct. The people of Bangladesh are not hearing the truth. The press publishes only reports received from Western media; it does not print our reports. Regarding Afghanistan, he said that according the UN Charter any nation can come forward to aid another friendly nation at its request. Bangladesh supported the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and that has been done: The Soviet troops have left. However, there has been no Bangladesh reaction in this regard.

When asked whether he considered the presence of Indian troops in the Maldives and Sri Lanka as aggression or hegemony, the Soviet ambassador said that India has not committed any aggression or extended its hegemony. However, it is strictly an issue pertaining to those nations involved. [passage omitted]

The ambassadors noted that improvements in Sino-Soviet, Sino-Indian, Soviet-U.S., Indian-Pakistani, and Indian-U.S. relations influence world politics and the situation in the subcontinent.

The ambassadors also wished for the success of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

PRC Army Chief, Military Delegation Arrive

BK0803023589 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] An eight-member Chinese military delegation has arrived in Dhaka on a week-long good-will visit to Bangladesh. The team is led by the chief of the General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, General Chi Haotian. The chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General M. Atiqur Rahman, received them at the airport yesterday.

UN Secretary General Departs for Nepal 6 Mar

BK0603142089 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] The UN secretary general, Mr Perez de Cuellar, and Madam Marcella Cuellar were given a hearty send off when they left Dhaka for Kathmandu Monday afternoon at the end of their 3-day visit to Bangladesh. President Ershad and Begum Raushan Ershad saw them

off at the Zia International Airport. Among others, Vice President Nurul Islam, Prime Minister Moudud Ahmad, ministers, diplomats, high civil and military officials were present at the airport.

India

Mongolian Leader Batmonh Continues Visit

Feted by Venkataraman

BK0803035089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] India and Mongolia have welcomed the direct talks between the concerned parties to solve the Cambodian problem. Speaking at a banquet in honor of the visiting top Mongolian leader, Mr Jambyn Batmonh, in New Delhi last night, the president, Mr Venkataraman, said the recent developments are encouraging. He welcomed the Jakarta informal meeting and hoped that it would lead to a stable and peaceful government, free from external interference in Cambodia.

The president said that Prime Minister Mr Rajiv Gandhi's recent visit to China has opened a new and positive phase in the relations with Beijing. He said the restoration of democracy in Pakistan will help foster good-neighborly relations, which are so necessary for the peace and progress of the people of both our countries.

Mr Venkataraman announced that a chair will be set up on Mongolian studies at the Jawahar Lal Nehru University in New Delhi. He said the facility will provide an impetus to the study of Mongolia's rich heritage and its continuous many-sided progress.

In his reply, the Mongolian leader said the timetable for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops and the continuation of dialogue between various Cambodian sides inspire hope for solving this problem peacefully.

Confers With Gandhi

BK0703162189 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] The visiting general secretary of the Mongolian Revolutionary Party, Mr Jambyn Batmonh, and the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, had wide-ranging discussions on international, regional, and bilateral matters. The meeting lasted over 2 hours. Simultaneously, the two countries' delegations led by their foreign ministers held official talks separately.

An official spokesman told newsmen that the talks covered Afghanistan, Kampuchea, and the relations of the two countries [Mongolia and India] with the Soviet Union and China. Mr Gandhi said that while the political relations between the two countries are excellent, we have to find areas of cooperation where interactions are easier in view of the difficult communication and transport problems.

Mr Batmonh congratulated the prime minister for his successful visit to China. The Mongolian side disclosed that Jawahar Lal Nehru centenary will be celebrated in a big way in their country. A translation of Nehru's "Glimpses of World History" is to be brought out. The Mongolian president extended an invitation to Mr Gandhi to visit his country.

Earlier Mr Batmonh, who arrived on a 4-day visit to this country, called on the president, Mr R. Venkataraman.

Holds News Conference

BK0803090089 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] The Mongolian leader, Mr Jambyn Batmonh, has said his country shares India's views on important regional and international issues. Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, he said this was reaffirmed during his talks with Indian leaders. Matters of international peace and security, particularly the situation in the Asia-Pacific region, figured prominently in his discussions. He expressed complete satisfaction with the outcome of the talks and hoped his visit will further strengthen relations between the two countries.

Mr Batmonh expressed confidence that Mongolia will have better ties with China following the improvement in Sino-Soviet relations. Soviet troops stationed in Mongolia to defend the country's sovereignty are being withdrawn as a step toward normalization. The process, he said, will be complete by 1990.

On Afghanistan, Mongolia's top leader said that the Soviet Union and Afghan Government have already fulfilled their obligations under the Geneva accords. He called upon the other parties to fulfill their commitments. He said Mongolia wants an independent, sovereign, and nonaligned Afghanistan.

Mr Batmonh will leave New Delhi for Agra this afternoon.

Further on News Conference

BK0803104089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1003 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] New Delhi, March 8 (AFP)—Mongolian leader Jambyn Batmonh, citing prospects of an improvement in Sino-Mongolian ties, said here Wednesday he would soon be sending his foreign minister to China.

Mr Batmonh told a press conference that Foreign Minister T. Gombosuren would be travelling to Beijing soon on an official visit. "There are good prospects for improvement in relations between Mongolia and China," he said.

Mr Batmonh, on the second day of a four-day visit to India, said the Soviet Union had started pulling out troops it had deployed in Mongolia on Ulaanbaatar's request. The pull-out will be completed by 1989-90, he said.

Beijing has in the past cited the presence of Soviet troops on the Mongolian border with China as one of the obstacles in normalising Sino-Soviet relations.

Mr Batmonh also announced that Mongolia would be reducing its armed forces by 13,000 men, apparently emboldened by prospects of a thaw in relations with China. He said the troop cut would help strengthen peace in Asia, but gave no more details.

Mr Batmonh hoped an upcoming Sino-Soviet summit would strengthen relations between the two communist giants. He hoped normalisation of Sino-Soviet ties would have a positive effect on Mongolia's relations with China.

He spoke of a thaw in relations between Mongolia and China, which cooled in the early 1980's, citing increased contacts in trade, culture and sport.

Mr Batmonh ends the official part of his visit to India later Wednesday and will tour the Taj Mahal town of Agra, the Hindu holy city of Varanasi and the Buddhist pilgrim centre of Bodhgaya before returning home Friday.

Cases Against Sikh Political Detainees Withdrawn

BK0703160989 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Cases against all the remaining Jodhpur undertrials [arrested after the Army raid on Golden Temple in 1984] have been withdrawn and they have been released. Seventy-eight of them had been flown to Adampur in Punjab, two to Sriganganagar in Rajasthan, two to Delhi, and one to Bombay. According to official sources formalities about transferring the SGPC [Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak—Sikh Temples Management Committee] president, Mr G.S. Tohra, from Jodhpur are being processed.

The Punjab Youth Congress-I has welcomed the political package announced by the prime minister and expressed the hope that the release of Jodhpur undertrials will pave the way for the restoration of normalcy in the state. Taking to newsmen in Chandigarh today, the party president, Mr Maninderjit Singh Bhitta, appealed to all political leaders to cooperate with the government in creating an atmosphere of peace, brotherhood, and confidence in Punjab.

New Units Added to Rajasthan Atomic Power Station

BK0703160489 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Two more units of 235 mg capacity each are under construction at the Rajasthan Atomic Power Station. Four more units each with 500 mg capacity will also be set up at the same site. This information was given in the Rajya Sabha today in reply to a written question.

Iran

Rushdie Affair Has 'Negative Impact' on Hostages

LD0803114189 Tehran IRNA in English 1029 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—An Iranian daily called the Islamic Republic's decision to break diplomatic ties with Britain a move to safeguard Islam and a proof that Iran is still "the strong bastion of Islam in the world."

Tehran severed diplomatic ties with London Tuesday after Britian failed to rectify its position towards the author of a novel which blasphemes Islam and the sanctities of one billion Muslims.

KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in an editorial today regarded London as the "loser" in its dispute with Iran and believed that "time will prove this." Iran instead has not lost anything because it has proved during the past ten years that it can stand on its own feet without relying on the west or the east, the English daily added.

The daily also voiced the conviction that "the event will leave its negative impact on the fate of the British hostages held in Lebanon."

The paper believed that the publication of the blasphemous novel "The Satanic Verses" "exposed the real nature of those who longed for establishing ties with Iran as well as their vicious intentions in doing so."

"Iran's firm resolve in breaking ties with Britain is also a warning to other Western countries, like West Germany, that they may be added to the list if they continue their hostility against the Islamic Republic.

"Islamic Iran is now at the beginning of the road to post-war reconstruction and this latest plot of the west has provided it a chance to tread the future path of relations with other states more confidently," the paper said.

Further on Reaction to 'Satanic Verses'

Velayati Message to ICO Head

LD0503175189 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] A delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, currently in Jeddah to attend the experts' session of the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO), met the secretary general of this organization and submitted a message from our Foreign Minister Mr Velayati, on the recent provocations of global imperialism against Islam, insulting Islamic sanctities by the publication and distribution of "The Satanic Verses" and the need to adopt necessary measures by the member countries of this organization in the 18th session of the ICO foreign ministers to confront such conspiracies.

In the course of this meeting the ICO secretary general said: Publication and distribution of the book "The Satanic Verses" has concerned all world Muslims. Referring to the support given by some anti-Islamic powers to the distribution of this insulting book, he stressed: These moves must be investigated in the ICO foreign ministers' conference and legal measures should be taken against them.

Messages Handed to Oman, Qatar

LD0503170389 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] The Iranian ambassador to Oman today met Oman's foreign minister and submitted a message from Foreign Minister Velayati on the distribution of "The Satanic Verses."

Our ambassador in Qatar also met Qatar's minister of state for foreign affairs this morning and submitted a message from Mr Velayati on the need for a united approach in the Islamic world in the face of imperialism's new conspiracy, that is, the publication and distribution of the blasphemous book "The Satanic Verses."

Golpayegani Sends Message

LD0603211489 Tehran IRNA in English 1617 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] Qom, Central Prov., March 6, IRNA—The main goal of the enemies of Islam is to separate Muslims from the holy Koran and prevent the oppressed and deprived masses from learning it, Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Golpayegani said here today.

The ayatollah in a message to a conference on Koranic teachings and sciences said the biggest weapon against the vicious goals of Islam's enemies is to teach Koran to the people.

The publication of the blasphemous book "The Satanic Verses" and imperialist support for it reveals enemy efforts to misportray Islam. "These efforts also show their great fear of Islam as the only school for suppressing arrogance."

The message said it was not the first time that colonialist propaganda bodies wrote against Islam and used their pens to distort Islamic realities. The book is among the means the arrogance has resorted to in order to deviate the people.

Contrary to the enemies expectation the book helped Muslims to close rank against the conspirators, and the wrath of Muslims and their strong reaction showed that they would not bear any insult to their sanctities, although the so-called security forces turned their demonstrations into a bloodbath, it added.

The writer of the book deserves execution and his likes should know that insult to the holy prophet (PBUH) [peace be upon him] has death penalty. "Muslims will never forget this treacherous plot," Ayatollah Golpayegani stressed.

He said it was a duty of the 'ulema, writers and theological schools to expose the vicious nature of the book through logical criticism.

Musavi Statement to Cabinet

LD0403164189 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] During today's cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Musavi referred to the verdict of his holiness the imam on Salman Rushdie and emphasized: The policy of "Neither East nor West" will not be possible without our manifesting our decisive reliance upon Islam. Today is the day when the defense of Islam and of Islamic values should be felt, and the West should realize that the dream of the universalization of Western culture and values has come up against a powerful obstacle.

The prime minister added: The verdict of his holiness the imam brought about conditions for the Muslims to became aware of their power in the world. The longer the West confronts this verdict the more intensive will be the uprising of the Muslims in the world.

Musavi Praises Khomeyni Edict

LD0503183889 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Musavi attended a glorious ceremony in Tehran's Unity Hall this evening in order to mark the 10th anniversary of the establishment of Imam Khomeyni's Relief Committee. [passage omitted]

In a speech the prime minister referred to the reasons behind the publication of the book, "The Satanic Verses." He said: This book is written on the basis of sociological factors so as to undermine the legendary outstanding Islamic figures and the beliefs of our people and other Muslims.

With regard to particular features of the imam of the ummah's fatwah, Mr Musavi said: This fatwah overrules all the existing norms of the Islamic world and in practice there will be no possibility for continuation of hegemony. The imam's fatwah infiltrates and breaks these systems and everyone is feeling threatened. We today feel the clean outcome and the progress of this issue among the world Muslims, and this is a victory for Islam.

Editorial on Need To Prevent Economic 'Terrorism'

NC0603142089 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 25 Feb 89 pp 1, 18

[Unattributed editorial: "The Capitalists' Exploitation of the Recent Revolutionary Move"]

[Text] The imam's spiritual and revolutionary decree on executing Salman Rushdie, who is a true example of the Western and anti-Islamic political and cultural process, is clearly a move to defend ideology, religion, and the respect and identity of millions of Muslims and even of millions of non-Muslims in the world's oppressed and deprived nations.

This holy move is in defense of these very people, and also in defense of the oppressed in this country; it is in defense of all people, even the most deprived. However, the foreign enemies of the people and of the deprived are trying to pick up the bomb that we hurled at the aggressors in defense of the people's legitimate rights, and to throw it back at us hoping that the smoke will blind our eyes.

Our country's administrative and executive machinery should be able to fall in line with the imam's move. This means we should act in unison in compiling programs and managing affairs. This will prevent certain individuals from suddenly emerging from inside the country and trying to muddy the waters in a bid to exploit a holy and revolutionary move. It will also prevent them from gradually raising the prices of gold and foreign exchange in such a way that they have an impact on other goods—as happened before but on a vaster scale this time.

Of course, it is a known fact that regarding our country's economic situation after 8 years of imposed war and sacred defense, bitter experiences have shown that capitalists and those who hold the reins in their hands can resort to a new pretext every day and turn it into a weapon in order to inflict more economic pressures on the pious and revolutionary people of this oppressed society.

This is obvious. However, our country's administrative and executive systems should, on the one hand, have the power to ensure sufficient supplies, and, on the other hand, organize the necessary programs. They should be able to move rapidly to the heart of the matter, to rein in as best as possible the economic moves by the capitalist leeches and those affiliated with the enemy, and to prevent this kind of terrorism which is a hundred times worse than the most dangerous and blinding terrorisms. We should not forget that in addition to wisdom, production, scientific planning, revolutionary decisiveness, belief, and faith, speed of action is also necessary.

Further Reportage on Breaking of Ties With UK

Foreign Ministry Denies Claims

LD0403172289 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Denying the claims made by the British mass media about Iran's request to hold talks with British media about Iran's request to confer with British authorities, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said that despite repeated requests by the British Foreign Office to contact and meet with Iranian officials, those requests have been refused by our country's Foreign Ministry. Basically, there is no need for contacts and meetings.

He stressed: Since the recent crisis, our Foreign Ministry has not received any letters from the British foreign secretary. We deny those comments made by the British mass media about this issue.

UK Lawyer To Prosecute Rushdie

LD0703211789 Tehran IRNA in English 1540 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] London, March 7, IRNA—A London lawyer is investigating the possibility of prosecuting Indian-born British author Salman Rushdie for incitement to riot over his controversial book "The Satanic Verses."

Roberts Gibbons says he is considering mounting a private legal action under Britain's 1986 public order law on the grounds that his book was responsible for inciting riots and disorder in key British cities with large Muslim populations.

Home Secretary Douglas Hurd implicity suggested that Rushdie was inciting public disorder last Saturday when he called for calm among Muslims demonstrating against the book.

His call had followed a protest rally at Halifax, northern England, last Friday, when for the first time in the U.S. since the book was published in London last September violence broke out. Further demonstrations at the northern city of Sheffield and Derby in the Midlands on Saturday led to copies of the book being burnt and chants for the author to be killed, but unlike protests in some parts of the world, no deaths have been caused in the U.K.

The move by the London lawyer, who is said to have strong Arab links, comes after race advisers suggested that both Rushdie and his publisher could be charged with inciting racial hatred. It coincides with a separate attempt to prosecute the author for blasphemy that is due to be heard next week.

Tehran Tuesday formally severed relations with London in the row over the affair.

The prosecution under the public order law would need the prior consent of the attorney general and according to the DAILY MAIL the government is said to be no longer standing in the way of the prosecution.

The attorney general Sir Patrick Mayhew, as well as Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, have refused to act against the book, claiming that the author had acted within the law.

In a separate development the Islamic Society for Religious Tolerance added its voice to the growing call on Rushdie to "end the suffering" by withdrawing the book from sale himself.

Commentary on Severing Ties

LD0703212989 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1930 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The break in Iran and British ties comes at a time when during the past 2 weeks, British Government authorities, in their official capacity, have acknowledged the insulting nature of "The Satanic Verses." However, despite this acknowledgement, they have failed to rectify their positions. "The Satanic Verses," which in a disgusting manner has ridiculed the values of Islam and its sanctities, brought about angry reactions from the Muslims all over the world, and Imam Khomeyni, the leader of the Islamic Revolution, issued a religious decree on Salman Rushdie, [words indistinct] to death outlines Islam's approach towards such plots. In a political move, Britain attempted—by creating an uproar and posing a threat to the Islamic Republic—to stop all Muslims' moves from being turned into an all-embracing campaign.

However, this issue was actually instrumental in causing a wave of reaction among the world Muslims including the Islamic Republic of Iran. Now Britain, in this situation, has begun to repeat its past performances, but this time such moves will bring irreparable harm to the British regime. The British Government has currently placed itself in confrontation with all Muslims, and Iran's severing its ties with the British Government is an indication of such hostility. The rulers in the British Isles will not gain anything from continuing their obstinate stand against the Islamic world. One billion Muslims in the world cannot tolerate the continuation of such poignant enmity and undoubtedly other governments, in emulation of British policy, have turned themselves into collaborators in the British offense.

ABRAR Cited on Cutting Ties

LD0803073989 Tehran IRNA in English 0735 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—A Tehran daily today urged Iranian officials to put an end to Britain's economic interests in Iran now that diplomatic ties with that country have been severed.

"It is now up to the country's political officials to remove the assumption of preserving economic relations from the mind of London-dwellers, and warn other Western countries against the consequences of hostility with Islam and the Islamic Republic of Iran," said Persian daily ABRAR in its editorial today.

Tehran broke diplomatic ties with London Tuesday after Britain failed to respond positively to the Majlis ultimatum to apologize to Muslims for its support to the British author who blasphemed Islam in its novel THE SATANIC VERSES.

"The consequences of enmity with Islam and with the Islamic Republic should also be made clear to the other Western governments," ABRAR said.

The daily called the Iranian diplomatic move as "unprecedented" and worthy of notice as "Iran took the initiative perhaps for the first time in the history of bilateral relations."

"The new step in Iran's policy towards the world powers can be set as an example for other countries under domination."

ABRAR concluded that "the British colonialism must taste its first bitter experience of insulting the beliefs of more than one billion Muslims of the world."

Editorial on Ultimatum to UK

NC0603115589 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 1 Mar 89 p 2

[Editorial "Opinion" column: "U.K. Has 1 Week To Mend Fences"]

[Text] Parliament has deferred the decision on a bill calling for a total severance of Tehran-London ties to next week. The bill, moved by some 100 deputies, had been presented to the Majlis on Sunday. The postponement mainly backed by Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani faced strong opposition from radicals. The majority however adopted a more realistic stance by giving London a week to condemn "The Satanic Verses", a book blaspheming the faith embraced by over a billion people the world over.

Given the present account of the events two scenarios may unfold in this connection. In the first scenario Iran-U.K. relations will be totally ruptured should London fail to mend the fences through a logical condemnation of the anti-Islamic book. If so, it would be a pity as great efforts had been made and ample time spent to improve the ties. Such a severance will certainly not serve the national interests of the two countries.

The British Foreign Office, in its strategic considerations to expand ties with Iran, indeed engaged in a great politico-economic investment and succeeded in installing its diplomats in Tehran in spite of ample pressures from domestic political groupings.

The severance of ties then will face London with greater damage as compared with other EEC members. West Germany and France, which are still retaining their economic ties to Iran, might outmaneuver the U.K. by exploiting any new political parameter. On the basis of information at hand it may be foreseen that both Paris and Bonn will hold on to their economic relations here and that their political standings too will not be seriously hurt.

London then has, at the movement, the opportunity to salvage its strained ties with Tehran by coming up with the right kind of the statement. Britain's failure to seize upon this opportunity is a sure sign of here support for Salman Rushdie's dilatorious move. By all calculations the nation's strategic and national interests should be given precedence over support for bankrupt intellectual who seeks fame upon insulting the sanctities of a billion faithful.

In the second scenario, i.e. the U.K.'s affirmative response to Iran's demand for a condemnation of insults done to religious sanctities, London will show an intellectual understanding. By this it will also provide the wing for what can be termed "more realistic policies" in Iran with better grounds to back their stands.

As such any illogical move on the part of London or even its silence on the matter will only further bolster in their positions those against Tehran-London ties. When completed, the severance in Irano-British ties can easily be foreseen to sustain for at least a decade. And as its first consequence, Tehran will have to move its purchase cents [as published[in London to elsewhere.

IRNA Cites BBC on Dispute

LD0703165789 Tehran IRNA in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] London, March 7, IRNA—The British Government wants to cool down the dispute over the publication of "The Satanic Verses" to allow some kind of relationship to redevelop with Iran, the official BBC Radio World Service said.

Correspondent Jack Thompson Tuesday said the Foreign Office "no longer wanted to stir things up" and was hopeful of trying to keep some informal contact with Tehran going following its decision earlier in the day to completely sever diplomatic ties with London.

He did not contemplate any reprisal from the British Government like trade sanctions, which Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has opposed in the past as reprisals against other countries.

BBC World Service is funded by the Foreign Office and is commonly assumed to carry the official views of British Government.

The Foreign Office itself has yet to formally comment on Iran's decision, saying it was waiting for official confirmation through the Swedish Embassy in Tehran which is taking care of British interests.

At its lunchtime briefing session, a Foreign Office spokesman repeated its claim that the dispute was of Iran's making.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry announcing the break said its policy was to defend Islam and accused Britain of maintaining its hostile stance even after being given a week to alter it.

Larijani on Government's Position on Shatt al-'Arab

LD0703174189 Tehran IRNA in English 1555 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Ahvaz, March 7, IRNA—Iraq would not be allowed to use the Arvand River until total withdrawal from Iranian soil, a senior Foreign Ministry official said.

Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Larijani reminded that more than 2,000 sq kms of Iranian territory was still under Iraqi occupation.

The Arvand River, or Shatt al-'Arab according to Iraq, is Baghdad's only outlet to the Persian Gulf from Basra, its most important port.

Iraq should accept Resolution 598 in its entirety especially regarding the withdrawal of troops from Iran, Larijani said. "Iran will not step back from its principled stance in this regard."

He said no considerable progress had been made in peace talks with Iraq who was likely to continue to prolong the negotiations due to continue later this month. "Our stance will not change anyway." he added.

Larijani emphasized the need for military readiness to defend the country since "world arrogance would not abandon its hostility towards the Islamic Republic."

Deputy Foreign Minister Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam was also present at the meeting, where he called for the set up of an international convention in the aftermath of the Salman Rushdie affair to prevent any insult to Islamic sanctities.

Mujahidin Leader Hikmatyar Briefs Velayati

LD0703180689 Tehran IRNA in English 1706 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 7, IRNA—Leader of Afghanistan's Hezb-e Eslami and member of the Peshawar-based seven-party mujahidin alliance Gulbuddin Hikmatyar separately conferred with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his first deputy 'Ali Mohammad Besharati today.

In his meetings with the two Iranian officials, Hikmatyar dwelt on the Afghan situation, including the recently formed provisional government and its future plans.

The interim government set-up by the Pakistan-based mujahidin is yet to take office in Kabul, and lacks country-wide support for by-passing other main ethnic groups especially the Iran-based eight-group coalition which controls large parts of Afghanistan.

Velayati drew Hikmatyar's attention to this important point, and placed emphasis on solidarity among all mujahidin groups for final victory over the Soviet installed regime and formation of an Islamic government representing all Afghan people.

Hikmatyar holds the defense, agriculture and scientific research portfolio in the interim government which is composed chiefly of Pashto-speakers, who have traditionally dominated this landlocked mountainous region, since it arose as an independent state in the early 18th century on the ruins of the Safavid and Moghul empires.

Besharati, in his meeting with Hikmatyar also expressed hope that an Islamic and "popular government" would be formed in Afghanistan.

The bone of contention between the two groups is the composition of the 500 seat shura. The Iran-based coalition was promised 100 seats but some Peshawar groups went back on their words, insisting on not more than 60, which forced the Shi'ites to boycott the shura.

Afghan sources said late February that Sibghatullah Mojadeddi was elected the head of the shura after securing 440 seats. Consequently they went ahead and named the interim cabinet, ignoring several other groups. Hikmatyar's visit to Iran is to work out a solution.

Asks Support for 'Government'

LD0803091689 Tehran IRNA in English 0908 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—Gulbuddin Hikmatyar a leader of the Peshawar based 7-party alliance of Afghan mujahidin currently here on a visit said he had come to Tehran to gain Iran's support for the interim Afghan Government.

Speaking in a press interview Tuesday [7 March] Hikmatyar who arrived here last Monday expressed hope that the Islamic Republic of Iran will recognize the provisional government. "This will be a great honor for us," he told reporters at Tehran's Esteqlal Hotel.

Hikmatyar who holds the portfolio of defence, agriculture and scientific research said he has urged the Islamic Republic officials to voice support for the interim government in the forthcoming meeting of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and international forums, as the representative of the majority of Afghan groups.

He said another reason for his visit was to hold talks with leaders of the Iran-based eight-party Afghan coalition, he added he has asked them to play their role in the interim government and send delegates to Pakistan to be present in the commission in charge of general elections for Assembly of Experts.

He expressed the hope that preparations for the elections will be made in the next five months. The transitional government after securing vote of confidence, will hold the first cabinet session inside Afghanistan, said Hikmatyar.

He told reporters that the transitional government will embody all parties and groups on equal basis and will not be a government in exile. He stressed that the mujahidin have decided to return to their homeland as soon as possible.

Asked whether mujahidin representative wil be invited to the OIC meeting, he said, "we have officially been invited and will make an address to the conference. We intend to urge Islamic governments to officially recognize our government" he added.

Asked to comment on possibility of return of Zahir Shah to power, he said Zahir Shah was now part of the history with no serious support in Afghanistan. "If he plans to take power forcefully, he will have no better fate than Najibullah and others," he said.

Chinese Vice Premier Tian Departs 7 Mar

LD0703182289 Tehran IRNA in English 1820 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 7, IRNA—China's Vice Premier Tian Jiyung was seen off by Deputy Prime Minister for Executive Affairs Hamid Mirzadeh at the Mehrabad International Airport today.

Before departure, the Chinese official termed as "successful" the results of his 4-day stay in Tehran and appreciated the trend of China's "friendly relations" with the Islamic Republic. "Sino-Iranian relations are strategic" he said and was confident that existing bottlenecks in bilateral trade and industrial ties could be eliminated through mutual endeavour.

Mirzadeh replied that the Islamic Republic considers the People's Republic of China as a strong and committed country. "We think," he added, "progress of ties will to the benefit of both countries."

He said, articles of protocol of the 4th Iran-China Joint Economic Session held in Beijing last year were followed up during the Chinese official's visit, with both sides undertaking to honour its contents.

Tian Jiyung's visit was also instrumental in reaching understanding on several projects, Mirzadeh said, including setting up of a zinc melting plant, building and expansion of refineries and jetties, dam construction, dredging of rivers and completion of Tehran's subway.

China is to help Iran build four 125-megawatt power plants in the Caspian province of Gilan, he added.

The fifth Tehran-Beijing joint session will be held in Tehran in summer, said Mirzadeh predicting President 'Ali Khamene'i's oncoming visit to China will further promote mutual relations.

During his four-day stay, the Chinese official conferred with President 'Ali Khamene'i, Majlis Speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Premier Hoseyn Musavi and his counterpart Hamid Mirzadeh.

Oil Minister Aqazadeh Departs for Algeria

LD0703141489 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Oil Minister Aqazadeh left for Algeria today, heading a team of Oil Ministry officials.

The Central News Unit reports that the visit is taking place within the framework of Iranian-Algerian bilateral relations and in line with creating greater harmony among the OPEC member countries.

During the course of this visit, the oil minister will meet his Algerian counterpart, as well as the Algerian president and prime minister. Furthermore, a team of officials from the petrochemical industries, the National Gas Company, and the National Oil Company of Iran are taking part in the visit.

Discussions and exchanges of information will be carried out on the following topics: the production, technology, and export of natural gas; the manufacture of petrochemical products; and the purchase of equipment necessary for gas pipelines.

No Government Funds Allocated for Peugeot Deal

LD0703213689 Tehran IRNA in English 1659 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 7, IRNA—Responding to critics, the Heavy Industries Ministry has said its cooperation with the French Peugeot Company for the production of passenger cars would not entail any financial burden on the government in terms of foreign exchange.

"Not a single dollar has been allocated for this purpose," said the ministry in a statement published in the daily ETTELA'AT Tuesday.

The ministry was answering criticism that the contract with Peugeot in January for the assembling of 500,000 cars over the next ten years was a luxury Iran could not afford and should resist.

Last month Construction Jihad Minister Gholamreza Foruzesh said instead of Peugeot cars, Iran should produce tractors to increase agricultural production.

The Heavy Industry Ministry said Iran had the ability to produce up to 35,000 tractors and 750 combines a year but because of shortage of foreign exchange production had dropped to only 2,000 tractors and 90 combines between March 1987-88.

It stressed that the Peugeot deal did not require any foreign exchange commitments from the government.

It did not explain how Iran Khodrow, a company run by the ministry, would pay the French but said only that the Iranian company "must be able to find the needed foreign exchange through another source."

Majlis Speaker Visits Esfahan Aircraft Factory

LD0503175589 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Text] Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, acting commander in chief of the Armed Forces, inspected various sections of the Defense Ministry aircraft industries in Esfahan yesterday and was briefed on the programs and progress of this industrial unit.

During the visit, the radio-controlled "Ababil" drone aircraft performed maneuvers.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Credit Shortages

LD0503121389 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Interview with Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Majlis speaker and acting commander in chief of the Armed Forces, by an unidentified correspondent at the end of Hashemi-Rafsanjani's 4-day visit to Esfahan; date, place not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Correspondent] Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in connection with your visits to industrial centers, (?namely) the Mobarakeh steel mill, did you sense

any particular problems, particularly at the Mobarakeh steel complex? As the budget bill will be debated by the Majlis in the next few days, as Majlis speaker can you tell us if you will (?discuss) those problems?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Yes, they have problems, the biggest of which is a shortage of credit. Of course, that is not solely confined to this sector. All our technical, economic, and industrial activities have that problem. Well, perhaps if we are not at war next year, we may be able to fulfill their needs to a certain extent. However, it will take time. From a technical point of view I did not see any problems there. To be fair, there are vast resources of manpower in Esfahan.

[Correspondent] Thank you.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] You are welcome.

Commentary on National Cooperation Plan

NC0403075589 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1520 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Unattributed commentary from the "Weekly Report" feature: "National Cooperation: A Must for Development"]

[Excerpts] With the Majlis' approval last week of the bill on taxation for national cooperation in reconstruction, the country's executive system found itself on the threshold of new activities. Actually, after the acceptance of Resolution 598, it was quite natural that the budgets for reconstructing ports, oil terminals, production units, cities, medical centers, and other installations that had been completely destroyed during the 8 years of imposed war be based on domestic financial resources.

Thus, the plan for national cooperation can, with the moral and financial support of all the country's exploratory forces, pave the way both toward economic independence, a move that will guarantee continuing political independence, and toward the realization of the slogan "Neither East nor West." Therefore, the government should concentrate all its experts and ministries on this principle so that the plan for national cooperation can be implemented. By setting a criterion and basis for determining the limits of assets in the bill approved by the Majlis, favorable grounds have been created that can help overcome the great deprivations and turn the framework left over from the system of unbridled distribution and wealth increase into a framework for construction and development. [passage omitted]

In conclusion, it should be reiterated that the government should concentrate all its expertise on further strengthening the taxation system. In this way the national cooperation plan for reconstruction, which can be referred to in the future as the first vast and practical step toward national moral and financial cooperation, will not face complications and problems caused by an inferior taxation system and bureaucracy, and can safeguard the country from foreign political-economic loans.

Narcotics Seized; Addicts, Traffickers Captured

LD0403104389 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0730 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] Implementing the new law to combat narcotics trafficking, the Islamic Revolution Committee of Khorasan arrested 47 drug addicts and 3 drug smugglers over the past few days and handed them over to the judicial authorities.

In the course of their special investigations and pursuits, the Islamic Revolution Committee guards in the towns of Torbat-e Heydariyeh, Kashmar, and (Estariyeh) arrested seven drug smugglers and handed them over to the judicial authorities.

In addition, two professional traffickers were arrested, and 30 kg of opium, 1 revolver, and a vehicle were discovered and confiscated in the course of an armed confrontation between the guards of the Islamic Revolution Committees and the merchants of death in the Kahnuj reigon.

Daily Says Inflation Fuels Drug Addiction

LD0703213189 Tehran IRNA in English 1612 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Tehran, March 7, IRNA—A daily has expressed fear that if the Islamic government failed to control inflation it would involuntarily help the spread of drug addiction.

ETTELA'AT commented Tuesday that though addiction originated from abroad, such problems as unemployment and lack of programs to fill the spare time of the youth and the failure to help young married couples, also served to spread addiction.

In its continuing series of editorials on the subject, ETTELA'AT said the strict anti-drug law enforced since January 21 and its subsequent crackdown on drug traffickers had borne positive results.

But, the daily cautioned, as long as a young man could not lead an honorable life or failed to support his family, he could easily fall prey to international drug traffickers.

As long as one could make more profit from selling cigarettes on streets than working in the administrative, industrial, agricultural and cultural sectors, corruption could not be eradicated.

More than 200 drug smugglers have been hanged and dozens of tons of narcotics confiscated since January 21.

Nepal

AFP: India Withdraws Special Trade Arrangements

BK0403033089 Hong Kong AFP in English 1741 GMT 3 Mar 89

[By Kedar Man Singh]

[Text] Kathmandu, March 3 (AFP)—India has unilaterally decided to withdraw special trade facilities it previously provided to Nepal, official sources here said Friday [3 March].

Under the unilateral decision reached Wednesday, India is to withdraw preferential market facilities for 66 agriculture-based industrial products and other semi-processed forestry and agricultural goods, the sources said.

Under the special trade facilities, India refunds an average of 100 million rupees (3.9 million U.S. dollars) annually in excise duties collected from India's exports to Nepal.

Nepal, a landlocked kingdom of 18.2 million inhabitants including more than 3.5 million people of Indian origin, is India's third largest trade partner after Japan and Soviet Union, a spokesman of the Nepal Federation of Chambers and Industry said.

New Delhi informed Kathmandu of its decision Wednesday to halt the arrangement and to conduct future trade on the principle of "most favoured nation" as it does with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the sources said.

Nepal faced an official trade deficit of about three billion rupees (118.1 million dollars) in the 1987-88 fiscal year ending in mid-July. When unrecorded trade is taken into account, the figure is closer to four billion rupees (157.4 million dollars).

India's decision to drop the special trade facilities comes just a week before the expected informal visit of Indian Foreign Minister Narshimha Rao to Nepal, political observers noted.

The visit will be watched closely amid increasingly strained relations between New Delhi and Kathmandu since May, when Nepal imported some 65 truckloads of military goods including woolen clothes, blankets, firearms and scores of anti-aircraft guns from China.

India informally described Nepal's action as a violation of their 1950 peace and friendship treaty, but Nepal said that as a sovereign nation it could import arms from anywhere without informing India as long as the weapons did not cross Indian territory.

Two-way trade between Nepal and India had been conducted in Indian rupees, with an overdraft facility provided to Nepal's Central Bank of 400 million rupees (15.7 million dollars) against seven percent annual interest to enable Nepal to meet its trade imbalance with India.

The mode of payment for future trade between Nepal and India is expected to be finalised soon at proposed ministerial-level talks here which are also expected to resolve other trade problems between the two countries.

New trade and transit treaties, which detail Nepal's transit rights for trade with third countries outside India through maritime routes, are also expected to be signed during the talks.

In addition, the talks are expected to cover the more than 200,000 Nepalese nationals known as Gurkhas serving in the Indian Army under a trilateral treaty signed by Nepal, Britain and India. A new agreement will determine whether the Gurkhas' salaries, pensions and gratuities will continue to be paid in rupees.

Mr. Rao is to arrive here Monday [6 March], the day of the annual festival of the Hindu Lord Shiva. He will pray at the Pashupati Nath Golden Temple here before holding talks with his Nepalese counterpart, Shailendra Kumar Upadhyaya.

Indian Foreign Minister Arrives on 1-Day Visit

BK0603091889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, arrived in Kathmandu today on a day's visit to Nepal. The Nepalese foreign minister, Mr Shailendra Kumar Upadhyaya, received Mr Rao at the airport. He is likely to discuss matters of mutual interest.

Holds Talks With Upadhyaya

BK0603145889 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 6 Mar 89

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, held an hour-long meeting with the Nepalese foreign minister, Mr Sailendra Kumar Upadhyaya, in Kathmandu today. They are reported to have discussed measures to further improve relations between the two countries.

AIR [All India Radio] correspondent reports that Mr Rao, who had come on a pilgrimage to Nepal this morning, performed worship at Lord Pashupatinath temple on Maha Sivaratri [Hindu festival] today. Later, Mr Narasimha Rao returned to New Delhi.

AFP: King Confers With UN's Perez de Cuellar

BK0803005089 Hong Kong AFP in English 2213 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] Kathmandu, March 8 (AFP)—United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar held talks Tuesday [7 March] with King Birendra of Nepal on regional issues and the role of the U.N., official sources said.

They met for an hour at the Surkhet royal camp in southwest Nepal after Mr. Perez de Cuellar, who arrived here Monday on a four-day official visit, had flown from Kathmandu to visit historic sites near the border with India.

They discussed regional and world issues, including the Middle East and Afghanistan, as well as the role of the U.N. and potential assistance for Nepal's basic needs and environment conservation programs, the sources said.

Mr. Perez de Cuellar said he appreciated Nepal's participation in the U.N. peacekeeping force in the Middle East and monitoring team in Afghanistan.

The U.N. chief was to return to the capital Wednesday after being given an aerial view of Mt. Everest and other major Himalayan peaks, the sources said.

Pakistan

India Reportedly Sending Advisers to Kabul

BK0303125589 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Feb 89 p 1

[By Kamran Khan]

[Text] Karachi, Feb 24—There is renewed speculation that in an attempt to bolster the crumbling puppet regime of Dr Najibullah, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is sending scores of Indian officials to work as advisers to the beleaguered Afghan leader.

Well-informed Pakistani sources who picked up information from diplomats and other contacts in New Delhi and Kabul, said that these Indian officials will work with the Afghan Army, intelligence network called KHAD and the Home and Tribal Affairs Ministry officials.

Some of these officers are said to have arrived in the Afghan capital soon after the Soviet Army completed its withdrawal from Afghanistan on February 15 and were seen last week in Kabul at the President's House and with other senior Afghan officials, these sources said.

Some 500 Indian officials are expected to arrive in Afghanistan as advisers to the communist regime in the next few weeks.

Pakistani circles believe that this may be the part of a "secret agreement" reached between Dr Najibullah and Rajiv Gandhi during the former's visit to India last year. India was the only country, outside the communist bloc, to have invited Najibullah. India has never condemned the Soviet Union for its occupation of Afghanistan.

During his last year's visit to New Delhi Dr Najibullah and his aides spent most of their time in discussing with their Indian counterparts the scenario likely to emrge in Afghanistan after the return of the Soviet Army. Since then India intensified its diplomatic activities mainly aimed at crafting some position for the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in the new government.

Throughout the nine years of guerrilla war inside Afghanistan India had maintained a clear anti-Mujahidin position and Pakistani circles now see the latest Indian move to bolster Najibullah administration as an attempt to prevent, or at least delay, the Mujahidin take-over of Kabul.

Some observers beleive that Indians are now actively engaged in formulating strategy for the Afghan army in its final battle against the mujahidin.

In the Afghan capital where most of the Western embassies had been vacated by their staff just before the completion of Soviet troops withdrawal, the Indian mission is still considered as the most active—with the highest number of diplomats after the Soviet Union.

Informed sources said that the present condition of the Najibullah administration and its future was the focus of dialogue between the Soviet ambassador in Afghanistan, Yuliy Vorontsov, and top Indian officials in New Delhi last week.

Mr Vorontsov, who is also the chief Soviet negotiator on Afghanistan, the sources said, seeks an important Indian role in Afghanistan following his country's retreat.

Since the breakdown of his dialogue with Mujahidin leaders in Islamabad last month Mr Vorontsov has adopted a tougher tone, warning of grave consequences both for Pakistan and the Mujahidin.

Most of the Soviet military and intelligence advisers have also started leaving Afghanistan in different batches thereby further minimising the Soviet presence in the country. The vacuum created by the withdrawal of Soviet advisers will now be filled by the Indian officials, the sources said.

PLO's 'Arafat Arrives, Greeted by Bhutto

BK0803063989 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0600 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] A very warm welcome was accorded to PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat when he arrived in Karachi today on a 2-day official visit to Pakistan. He was received by Prime Minister Ms Benazir Bhutto at the airport. Retired Justice Qadeeruddin Ahmad, the governor of Sind Province; Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah, several provincial

ministers, members of parliament, Sind provincial assembly members, members of the diplomatic corps, and senior officials were also present on the occasion. The airport was elegantly decorated with flags of Pakistan and Palestine, colorful buntings, and welcome banners. Thousands of people were present at the airport to welcome the friend of Pakistan, shouting slogans of "Long live Pakistan-PLO friendship" and "Long live Yasir 'Arafat."

The PLO chief went straight to the tomb of the great leader Jinnah after his arrival in Karachi, laid a wreath there, and offered prayers. Our correspondent reports that great numbers of people lined both sides of the road to Jinnah's tomb from the airport waving small flags of Pakistan and Palestine.

Chinese Delegation Departs After 10-Day Visit
BK0303120689 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 3 Mar 89

[Text] The Chinese delegation led by the vice minister for [foreign] economic relations and trade, Li Lanqing, left Karachi today for Beijing after 10-day visit to Pakistan. Earlier, talking to newsmen, the leader of the delegation appreciated the progress made by Pakistan in the field of engineering.

President Says Punjab Conflict 'War of Words'
BK0503163489 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 5 Mar 89

[Excerpt] President Ghulam Ishaq Khan has urged all political parties to accept the verdict of the masses happily, and to give attention to the solution of real problems confronting the nation. Speaking to newsmen in Lahore this evening, he said there is no real confrontation between the Center and Punjab. He said it is only a war of words, and it may continue until both governments become stabilized. [passage omitted]

Punjab Minister Resigns, Assails Nawaz Sharif
BK0703160889 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] The food and agriculture minister of the Punjab, Sardar Maqsood Ahmad Khan Leghari, resigned from the provincial cabinet this morning. In a statement in Lahore this evening he said like other patriotic citizens of Pakistan, he has been observing with great distress the confrontational attitude of the Punjab government vis-a-vis the federal government. As a member of the Punjab cabinet, he repeatedly warned against this attitude but, unfortunately, without success.

He pointed out that democracy was restored after an 11 year struggle. Despite the efforts of the prime minister to establish a harmonious relationship with the Punjab provincial administration, the Punjab chief minister continues to take steps which are not only prejudicial to the parliamentary democracy but also create the risk of weakening the federal structure as entailed in the Constitution. Under these circumstances, he has decided to resign from the Punjab cabinet in protest and to separate himself from this undemocratic and nonfederal mode of action.

Maqsood Leghari said that the Punjab chief minister did not take any interest in and neglected the development of backward areas, which has greatly disappointed him. There was discrimination in the allocation of funds for the annual development program and a large portion of the funds were left to the personal decision of Nawaz Sharif. As a result, only a few big cities benefited from the program. All relevant rules were violated in filling government posts. Moreover, grants were provided without giving any due consideration to merit. He tried to meet the chief minister several times to complain against this mismanagement and regional discrimination, but he was not provided with an opportunity to meet him. If it is so difficult for him to meet the chief minister, then it is worth contemplating what difficulty a common man will face in trying to meet him, he noted.

Maqsood Leghari said that for these reasons, he is justified in his belief that Mian Nawaz Sharif's continuance in the post of the chief minister is neither in the interest of the nation nor that of Punjab, and, therefore, he will request the chief minister to resign from his post.

Leghari said he would like to clarify that he is a member of the Pakistan Muslim League and he will work to save the party from the undemocratic forces that have taken control of it. He said there are several members of the national and provincial assemblies who are in agreement with his views and who will also publicly announce their views in a few days. He said the first and foremost duty of a Pakistani citizen is to uphold the supremacy of the Constitution and the rule of law, and they should make decisions rising above their personal aims at all costs, the minister asserted.

People's Party Demands Punjab Chief's Resignation
BK0703164889 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] The parliamentary group of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] in the Punjab assembly has submitted a petition to the Punjab assembly secretary calling for the convening of the provincial assembly session. The Punjab assembly secretary told the Radio Pakistan correspondent this afternoon that the petition, bearing the signatures of the 75 provincial assembly members belonging to the PPP, has been submitted under Article 56 of the Constitution.

The PPP notice says the petition to convene the assembly session is based on a seven-point agenda, which includes a discussion on the law and order situation in the province; the dissolution of the Punjab Public Service Commission; irregularities in the appointments of magistrates, subdivisional, and deputy subdivisional

officers; amendments to the civil service codes; and the exploitation of government employees. The above-cited actions [by the government] were intended to continue the confrontation between the Center and the province.

The members of the PPP parliamentary party in the Punjab assembly jointly addressed a news conference in Lahore today. They said the speaker adjourned the last session of the Punjab assembly indefinitely even though it should have continued until 14 March according to the agenda. The members said even though the speaker has discretionary powers to adjourn the assembly session indefinitely, it was done unilaterally. The PPP members said the last session was summoned to especially consider the deteriorating law and order situation in the province. The house had to deal with many more issues when the speaker adjourned the session indefinitely. The speaker acted under pressure from the provincial cabinet which was not able to confront the opposition. They added that [Punjab Chief Minister] Mian Nawaz Sharif has dissolved the Punjab Public Service Commission in order to keep all authority for himself to fill new positions and to use this authority as a political kickback.

Answering a question, the members said the members of the Islamic Democratic Alliance themselves wanted to move a no-confidence motion in the house against the chief minister. They, however, said the PPP will support this motion of no-confidence.

The PPP has fought a war against dictatorship for 11 long years and it is ready to erase all its vestiges. They said the last session was adjourned indefinitely under the pressure of Mian Nawaz Sharif who did not want the members of the Islamic Democratic Alliance to consult among themselves or with any other group. They said the PPP is not expecting—in case the no-confidence motion is approved—to get a share in the Punjab government. It is the duty of the Islamic Democratic Alliance and the Muslim League to form the new government. The PPP may consider forming a coalition government in Punjab—provided an offer is made to this effect. The members said the Islamic Democratic Alliance wanted to introduce a no-confidence motion to end the confrontation between the Center and the Punjab so that they could give full attention to the welfare of the people, especially in Punjab.

They said Nawaz Sharif has lost the confidence of the majority of the house, and therefore they have asked him to submit his resignation and to pave the way for any member of the Islamic Democratic Alliance to form the government. They said it is the legal and constitutional right of the members of the assembly to bring a no-confidence motion against the chief minister if they are not satisfied with him.

Nawaz Sharif Rejects Demand

BK0803112789 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] The Punjab chief minister, Mr Nawaz Sharif, had a meeting with IJI [Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad] MNA's [Members of the National Assembly] and MPA's [Members of the Provincial Assembly] in Lahore today. Later, talking to newsmen, Mr Nawaz Sharif said that Pakistan People's Party would not succeed in its efforts to dislodge him from the office of the chief executive of the province. He criticized radio, television, and the press.

40 Senior Army Officers Retired From Service

BK0303121689 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 26 Feb 89 p 1

[By Kamran Khan]

[Text] Karachi, Feb 25—About forty senior army officers who had completed their age or service limit in the past few years have now been retired from service, according to knowledgeable official sources.

These sources said that the cases of all senior army officers who have crossed their age or service limit were reviewed by a board which met in Rawalpindi under the army chief, General Mirza Aslam Beg, before he left for a fortnight's visit to the United States.

The meeting of the review board on this subject used to be a common feature but the last such meeting in Rawalpindi to discuss such cases took place many years ago.

Among those who have been retired are 13 Brigadiers of Artillery Corps beside other officers of Colonel rank and above, the sources said.

It is expected that because of these large scale retirements dozens of junior officers will soon get promotions.

Sources said that the decision to retire senior officers having already completed their official age or service limit required for retirement was the second major decision which the Ministry of Defence took in the past two weeks.

Using her position as the Defence Minister last week Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto relieved the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate of covering political affairs.

Domestic political affairs will now be covered exclusively by the Intelligence Bureau headed by Mr. Akram Sheikh. It is learnt that the DIB [Directorate of Intelligence Bureau] will now send its reports to Mr. Iqbal Akhund, the Prime Minister's Advisor while reports of a top security nature will go straight to the Prime Minister.

Meanwhile the committee headed by Air Chief Marshal (Retd) Zulfiqar Ali Khan, which is reviewing the working of all the intelligence agencies, is expected to soon finalise its work. It will then forward is report and recommendations to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

The Committee was set up last month and has since been busy assessing the operation and examining the efficiency of the country's intelligence agencies.

Government Importing 2.5 Million Tons of Wheat

BK0403152289 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1400 GMT 4 Mar 89

[Text] The National Assembly was informed today that 2.5 million tons of wheat are being imported to meet the country's requirements. Food and Agriculture Minister Rao Sikandar Iqbal told the house during the question hour that 1.6 million tons of wheat have already been purchased and the agreement to import the remaining 900,000 tons is being finalized.

Sri Lanka

Foreign Minister, Soviet Official Discuss Ties

BK0703120989 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] The Soviet Union is impressed by the policies of President Premadasa, particularly to provide housing for all by the year 2000. This was stated by Mr (Kristo Plasov), president of the Sri Lanka-Soviet Friendship Society and secretary of the Presidium of the Russian Federal Republic, when he called on Minister of Foreign Affairs Ranjan Wijeratne yesterday.

Mr (Kristo Plasov) informed the minister of his visit to the Mahaweli [irrigation project] and stated that he was impressed by the progress made. He also made reference to President Premadasa's statement on perestroika and stated that the Soviet Union valued his support. He congratulated the minister of foreign affairs on his appointment. Mr (Kristo Plasov) discussed with the minister several matters of mutual interest.

Mr Ranjan Wijeratne said that he would do everything in his capacity to forge close relations between Sri Lanka and the Soviet Union. He made particular reference to the need to promote joint ventures with the Soviet Union and also develop tourism and trade.

Mr Wijeratne stated that the government and people of Sri Lanka were following the changes in the Soviet Union and were particularly pleased that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev is having the support of the Soviet people. He has made tremendous progress in achieving the goals he has set out in his country and for peace in the world.

The minister also made a reference to progress made in Soviet-U.S. relations and said such improvement in relations was good for the world. Mr Wijeratne thanked Mr (Kristo Plasov) for his visit and invited him to visit Sri Lanka again. The Soviet diplomat was accompanied by Yuriy Kotov, Soviet Ambassador to Sri Lanka.

Northeast Council Chief Minister Issues Warning

BK0703131489 Colombo SUN in English 25 Feb 89 p 1

[Text] Varadaraja Perumal, chief minister of North-East Provincial Council [PC], called on the central government to take necessary steps to ease the frustrations of the people of the North and East, warning that there would be serious repercussions if they are ignored.

At a PC meeting at the Trincomalee Town Hall on Tuesday he said that there are limits to one's patience. "It is true that we have surrendered our arms. We are now toothless lions eating only vegetables", he added. Although the president has announced the devolution of power to the North and East there are certain ministers and other official who are in the way, he said.

He said that Ministers S. Thondaman, Ranil Wickramasinghe, Dr Ranjith Atapattu, Dr Dahanayake and Mr Rajadurai have given their fullest cooperation towards this cause but added that those officers below their rank are being unscrupulous.

"They don't think of the North and East as a part of Sri Lanka. We have to depend on India for everything even for transport", he said.

Mr Varadaraja Perumal said that his request for a deputy inspector general [of police] and the deployment of the 1,500 Volunteer Force trained and awaiting appointment for the North-East province, is being put off on the ground that the measures have to be gazetted under Act 13 of the Provincial Council Act.

He also said that the provision of land—a serious cause for the problems in the North and East—is still with the the government agent and has not been handed over to him yet.

"The very people who talk about unity are unofficially colonising the North and East and, therefore, it is imperative that the land and the roads of the North and East should come under our provinces", the chief minister said.

Members From Northeast To Boycott Parliament

BK0803113189 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 8 Mar 89

[Text] (Shankar Ranaji), speaking on behalf of the Independent Group, which contested the general elections from the north and the east, said their 13 members will not attend Parliament on the 9th of this month. He explained at a news conference that negotiations being conducted with the government had yet not been concluded. He emphasized that this decision was not due to threats against them. He said that certain matters had to be resolved before they decided to enter the Parliament.

Mr (Ranaji) explained some of these necessary conditions. He said that they needed a permanent ceasefire [in the northeast]. There were other matters arising from the India-Sri Lanka accord, the sixth amendment, the referendum regarding the merger of the north and the east, the devolution package and measures taken by the successive governments, change in the democratic pattern in traditional Tamil areas. He expressed the hope that discussions regarding these conditions will be conclusive for them to enter parliament.

The spokesman disclosed that they had lengthy discussions with President Premadasa last night. They drew his attention to the general amnesty which the government promised. He said that their cadres are still in jail. They also requested the release of political prisoners. The president said that he would look into their matters.

6 JVP 'Extremists' Killed in Hideout Raid

BK0703161489 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 89

[Text] In Sri Lanka, 11 persons, including 6 JVP [Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna] extremists, were killed in the south of the country during the last 24 hours. Official sources said in Colombo that Sri Lankan troops raided a hideout of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna in Dorapi village in Galle District. Six militants were killed and three captured in the shoot out. JVP activists shot dead five people, including ruling party supporters, in separate incidents in the region.

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